MOKUMOKUREN

5

THE SUMMER

HIKARU DIED

CHAPTER 22

I CAME BY THINKIN' THE OLD MAN MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE, BUT THIS REALLY WORKED IN MY FAVOR.

GOT HERE JUST IN TIME TO MEET HIKARU INDOU-KUN.

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

Mokumokuren

5

CHAPTER 22

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H—

HI...

HI-KARU ?

?

IS HE DEA...

?

WH... UH?

...

.....

ACK!

WOOSH

SMACK!

HA HA HA HA HA!!

THUD

HAAH!

HAAH!

STICK! STICK! STICK! STICK! STICK! STICK!

C'MON, STICK! STICK! STICK! STICK! STICK!

SHIT!

WHY...!?

IT WON'T STAY ON!

BLUP

GLUP

SHF...

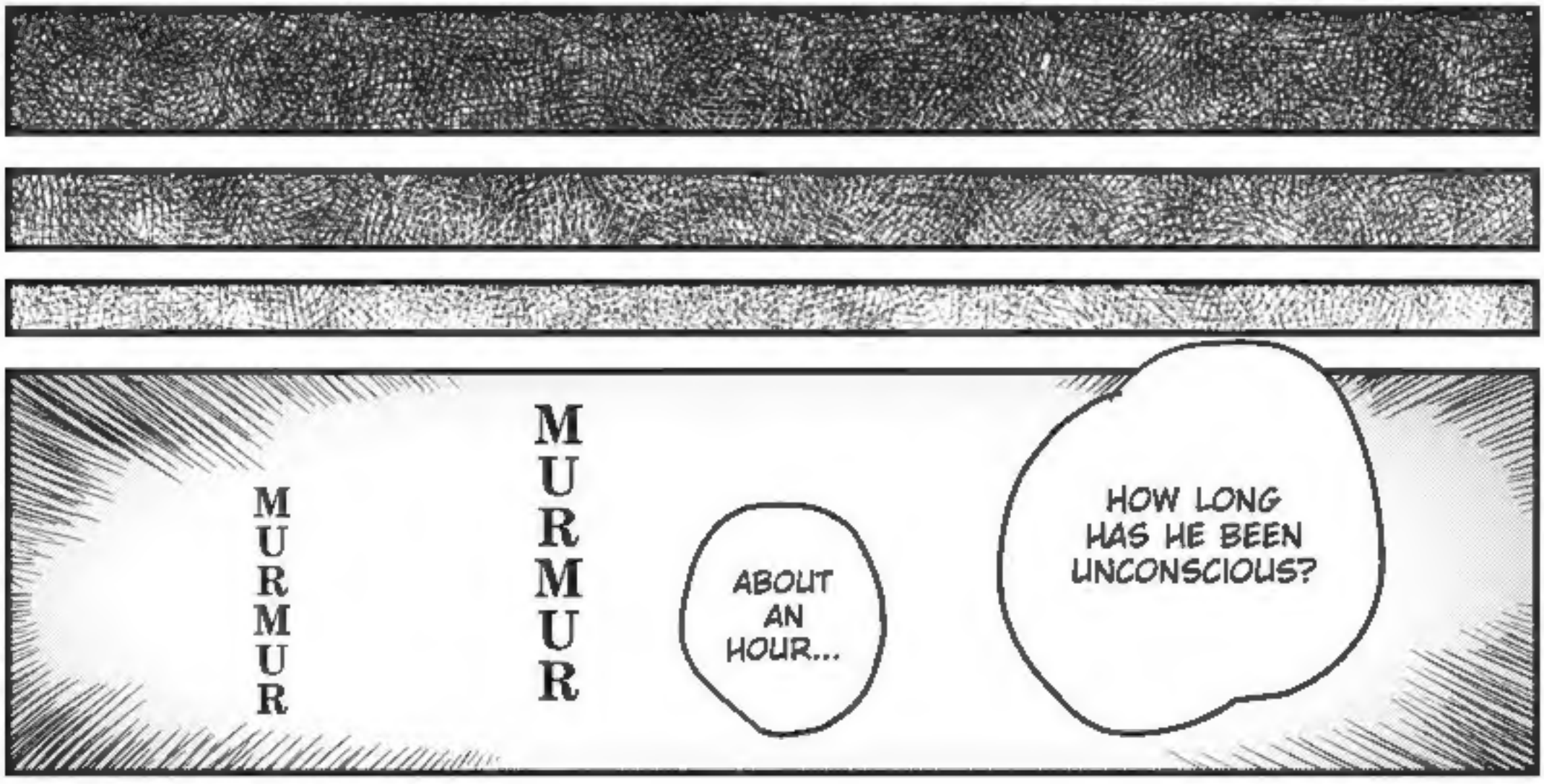
AAAAAAAAAAGH!

HFF...

HAAH...

SWOO...

WORLD


MURMUR
MURMUR
ABOUT AN HOUR...
HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN UNCONSCIOUS?

BOOM

WAAGH!

WHAT WERE YOU DOING AT TAKEDA-SAN'S HOUSE...!?

YOSHIKI... ARE YOU OKAY!?

MOM...

IS IT TRUE!? THEY'RE SAYING OLD MAN TAKEDA WENT BERSERK, AND YOU AND HIKARU TOOK A TUMBLE.

APPARENTLY, SOME SCHOLAR WHO'S STAYING IN TOWN BROKE IT UP?

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT.

IS HIKARU ...?

"IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR THE POLICE TO GET INVOLVED— JUST A BIT OF VILLAGE DRAMA."

LOOKS LIKE THAT'S HOW THEY'RE SETTLING IT. IT'S RIDICULOUS.

EVEN IF I DID FILE A CLAIM, NOTHING WOULD COME OF IT...

WAIT...A MINUTE...

DON'T TELL ME THE POLICE...

HE'S IN THE NEXT BED, SLEEPING...

SWISH

...BUT HE HASN'T WOKEN UP YET...

BUMP

THUMP

THIS SWORD ..

IT DID A FINE JOB CUTTING THAT THING. JUST AS EXPECTED.

I SNUCK IT INTO THE TAKEDAS' HOUSE IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, BUT IT PROVED TO BE PRETTY USEFUL.

I'M SERIOUSLY LUCKY THAT IT SHOWED UP IN THIS ERA.

THAT CONFIRMED THE SITUATION FOR ME. TOOK LONG ENOUGH.

DOES THAT MEAN I'VE JUST ABOUT ACCOMPLISHED MY GOAL?

AND THAT THING'S PRETTY FASCINATING. NOT ONLY DOES IT HAVE ITS OWN SENSE OF SELF, BUT IT ACTUALLY WEAKENED ITSELF!

TANA-KA!!!

BUT... IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN...

WHAT THE HELL HAP-PENED ...!?

THEY'RE SAYIN' HE HAD A HEART ATTACK.

SOUNDS LIKE... MY OLD MAN AIN'T GONNA MAKE IT.

I DIDN'T NOTICE QUICKLY ENOUGH

IT'S MY FAULT

SORRY I RUSHED OVER, BUT I DIDN'T MAKE IT IN TIME.

HE WAS TELLIN' THE TRUTH?

SO MY OLD MAN... ...SAYIN' THAT STUFF ABOUT BEIN' NEXT...

AND ONCE YOU'VE DISCOVERED THEM, THE MORE FRIGHTENED YOU GET, THE MORE EASILY THEY CAN TARGET YOU

THAT'S JUST HOW IT IS, AND IT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO BOTH MATSUURA-SAN AND YOUR FATHER

SEEING BEINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE

MEANS IT'S ALSO EASIER FOR THOSE BEINGS TO SEE YOU.

I SEE... WELL, IF I'M BEIN' HONEST...

...IT'S A RELIEF FOR ME AN' THE MISSUS... WRONG AS IT IS TO SAY THAT.

BY THE WAY...

...HAVE YOU SEEN...

.. MY SUN-GLASS-ES?

THEY'RE RIGHT'N FRONT A'YA...

HOLD ON...

SQUISH

YEAH ...

SURE AM.

ARE YA ACTUALLY BLIND?

SINCE WHEN?

AND I CAN SEE WELL ENOUGH WITH THESE SUNGLASSES.

BUT IT'S A TYPE OF CURSE.

...SINCE WAY BACK WHEN. WE GOOD HERE?

IT'S ANNOYING THAT THEY'RE COMPANY ISSUED, THOUGH.

MEDICAL EXAMS DON'T SHOW ANYTHING WRONG WITH ME.

WAIT.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE YA TRYIN' TO DO OUT HERE?

YOU SEE, MY "COMPANY" IS LOOKING FOR A *CERTAIN THING* FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

MY JOB.

SO THEY LOOK FOR PLACES WITH EVEN THE SLIGHTEST POSSIBILITY OF HAVING WHAT THEY'RE AFTER AND SEND EMPLOYEES LIKE ME TO INVESTIGATE.

THAT'S HOW VALUABLE IT IS.

THEY'VE BEEN RESEARCHING IT FOR CENTURIES...

BUT I RECKON THERE'S A REASON YOU'VE GONE OUTTA YER WAY FOR ALL THIS.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH 'BOUT THAT COMPANY OF YOURS!!

DROP

HA HA!

YOU'RE SHARPER THAN YOU LOOK.

NOT THAT.

I MEANT PERSON-ALLY.

...I JUST HAVE A LITTLE MORE ON MY PLATE NOW.

SINCE, AT THE VERY LEAST...

...I'M ON HUMANITY'S SIDE.

"NOUNUKI-SAMA."

I INTEND TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT THING. MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT THAT.

AND WHAT IF WE'RE ATTACKED BY IMPURITIES AGAIN...?

WHAT ABOUT DEALIN' WITH NOU-NUKI-SAMA !!?

HUH!? HEY!

...SO I'LL LET YOU TAKE CARE OF THINGS.

I'VE GOTTA LEAVE THE VILLAGE FOR A BIT...

LIKE I CAN—

THEN FIGHT 'EM OFF WITH THAT SWORD! YOU'RE A SIXTH DAN IN KENDO, RIGHT?

Missed Call
Satou

TESTS SHOW NOTHIN' WRONG, RIGHT?

HOW LONG'S HIKARU-KUN BEEN OUT FOR?

SO...YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT MAN EITHER, DO YOU?

IT PROBABLY... TAKES TIME WHEN THE DAMAGE IS LIFE-THREATENING.

IT'S BEEN TWO DAYS.

IF HE IS, I RECKON SOMEONE IN KUBITACHI MUSTA HIRED 'IM.

COULD BE...A MEDIUM OR SOMETHIN'.

FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, THAT MAN CUT HIKARU-KUN TO CHECK IF HE WAS SUPERNATURAL...

NAW ...

BUT IT SURE IS ODD...

I WONDER WHAT THEIR AIM IS.

AND YET NO ONE'S TRIED NOTHIN' OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS.

AND IF SO, I WOULDN'T BE NONE TOO SURPRISED IF WORD GETS 'ROUND 'BOUT HIKARU-KUN BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

YA CAN'T EXORCISE SOMETHIN' LIKE HIM!

HUH?

NAW! THERE AIN'T NO WAY!!

AH HA HA!

DON'T THEY WANNA EXORCISE HIM?

ALL A PERSON COULD DO IS PHYSICALLY TAKE HIM OUTTA THE VILLAGE...

...OR MAYBE LOCK 'IM UP SOME-WHERE?

HE'S PRETTY WEAK NOW, BUT NOT SO WEAK THAT A HUMAN COULD DO ANYTHIN' TO HIM.

BUT WHETHER THIS BOY COULD DO ANYTHIN' TO A HUMAN IS A WHOLE 'NOTHER STORY...

KEEP YER GUARD UP, AND IF THINGS GET DANGEROUS, YOU RUN RIGHT OVER TO MY PLACE.

I'LL TRY LOOKIN' INTO THAT MAN TOO.

AH, I SEE...

LOOK INTO HIM...? HOW?

SEERS HAVE THEIR OWN WAYS OF DOIN' THESE THINGS.

"JUST A HOUSEWIFE"...?

A MEDIUM, HUH...? OR IS IT THAT "COMPANY"...?

A man in his twenties has gone missing...

He was last seen at Daruma-zuka Tunnel in Kiboga-yama...

THE PATIENT NEXT TO US HAS HIS TV ON PRETTY LOUD...

...and the man, a Y-Tuber, posted on social media on the morning of the Xth...

...stating that he was going to Darumazuka and would upload a video if he made it back alive...

This tunnel is famously known for being haunted...

EVERYONE SAYS IT'S HAUNTED...

...BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHY.

HEY, D'YOU KNOW HOW THE DARUMAZUKA TUNNEL BECAME HAUNTED?

A WHOLE LOTTA THEM. THEY WERE OLD TOO.

WELL, THEY FOUND BONES HERE A LONG TIME AGO.

AND IN UDEKARI, THEY WERE JUST ARMS.

WHILE IN ASHIDORI, ALL THEY FOUND WERE LEGS.

THIS ALL HAPPENED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN, OF COURSE.

ODD THING WAS, ALL THE BONES WERE TORSOS.

THEY SAY THERE USED TO BE A CUSTOM OF BURYING THE VARIOUS BODY PARTS IN SEPARATE PLACES...

FOR REAL ...?

OH.

NO SKULLS...?

...BUT THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT IT ALL WAS THAT DESPITE FINDING ALL THEM BODIES...

...NOT A SINGLE ***SKULL*** WAS FOUND.

WAS THAT ITEM A HEAD?

THE INDOUS SIN: A GOD THAT GRANTS WISHES IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME SPECIFIC "ITEM."

WAS THAT A MEMORY OF ONE OF THE INDOUS' ANCESTORS FROM NOUNUKI-SAMA'S PERSPECTIVE...?

THE MAN I SAW WHEN "HIKARU" SWALLOWED ME UP BEFORE— HE LOOKED A LOT LIKE THE REAL HIKARU, DIDN'T HE?

THEY'VE ALL HAD SOMETHIN' WEIRD WITH THEM FROM THE NECK UP

COME TO THINK OF IT, THE MONSTERS I'VE BEEN SEEIN'

IS THAT WHAT LED TO THE MASS DEATHS?

THE MAN I SAW OFFERED UP A HEAD AND ASKED NOUNAI KU-SAMA FOR SOMETHIN'.

.....

AH!

TSUJI-NAKA-KUN!

HIKARU-KUN'S AWAKE...!

HI-KARU ...!!

CHAPTER 22 END

IF HIKARU'S HEAD WOULDN'T STICK BACK ON AND STARTED TO SPEAK...
WHAT IF I GOT A JOB IN A HAUNTED HOUSE?
.....

AT THIS POINT
I'M HARDLY
SURPRISED
BY ANYTHING
ANYMORE

GONG...

GONG...

TURN

GONG...

I AM...

...COLD.

AND EMPTY.

CHAPTER 23

...AND THEN I WILL BE SATISFIED.

I WILL SWALLOW THEM ALL INSIDE ME...

SO I WANT TO BE FILLED WITH MANY THINGS.

TURN

...IS WHAT I MUST DO.

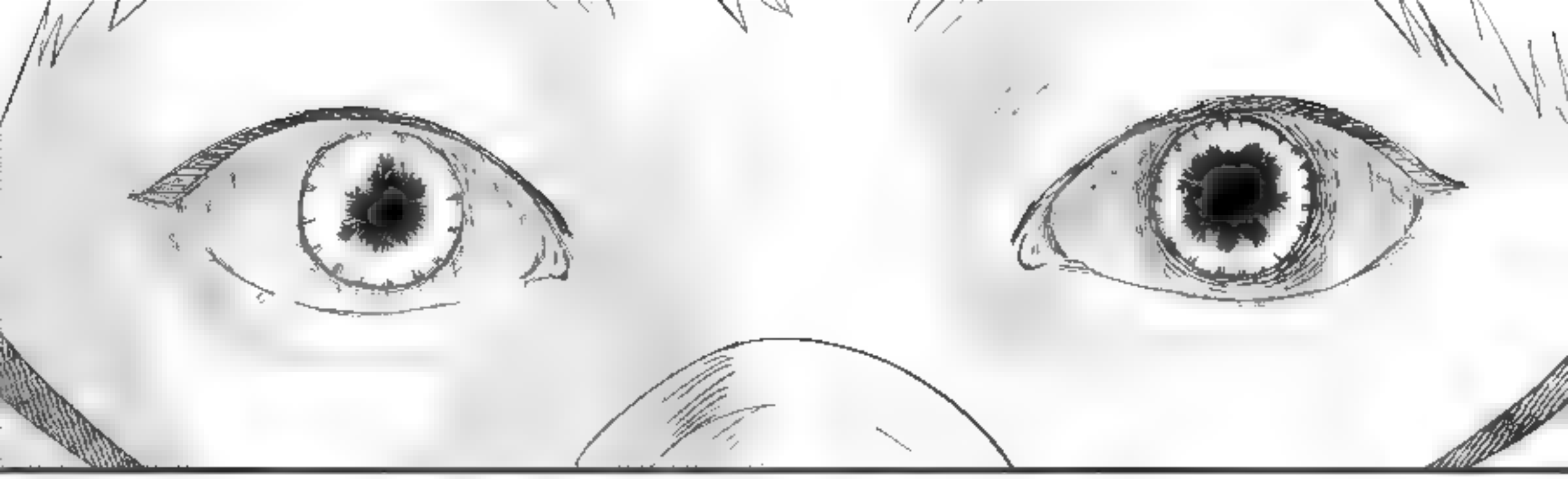
FOR THAT...

TURN

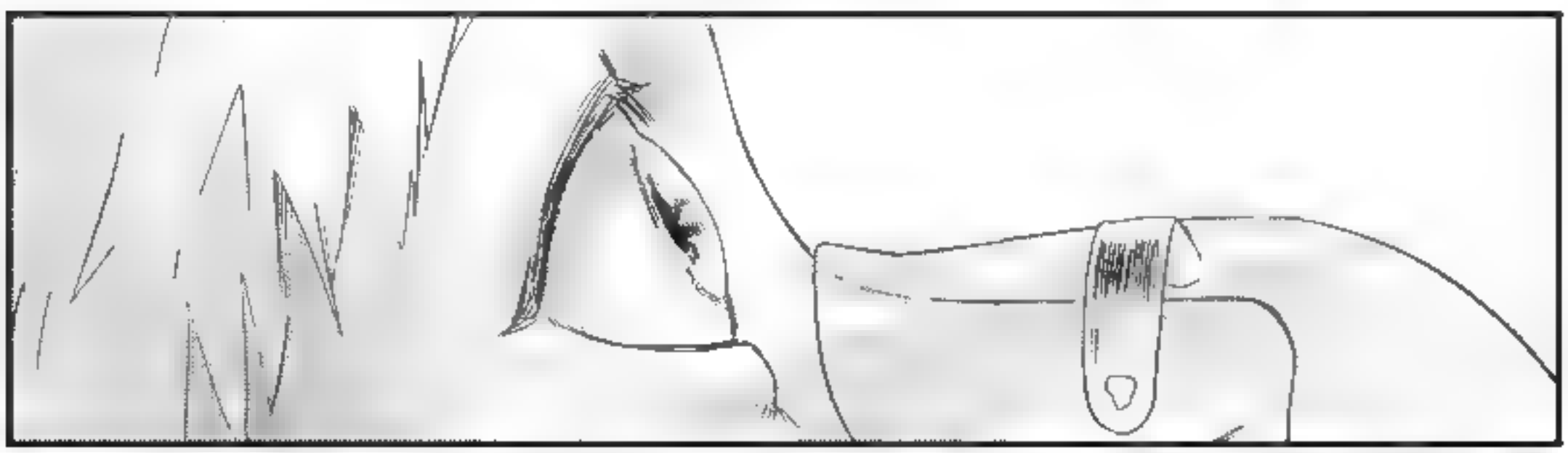
I FEEL COLD, SO COLD...

...FROM A GENTLE SOUL.

I FEEL WARMTH...



HIKARU?



...HMM

HEY!!!!!!!!!!!!

CLAP

AH!

...CAN YA...

...SAY YER NAME?

HUFF...

HUFF...

HUH?

HIKARU.

...HIKARU INDOU.

WHAT... WAS I JUS' DOIN'...?

YER BACK.

THANK GOODNESS...

...

I'M GLAD YER AWAKE.

HFF

HAAH

YO-SHIKI ...

HMM...SO I WAS OUT FOR OVER TWO DAYS, HUH?

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T FEEL PAIN...

OW...!

HI-KARU-KUN...

I AIN'T S'POSED TO, BUT I HAVE LATELY...JUST A LITTLE.

YER AWFUL WEAK NOW, AIN'TCHA?

THOUGHT SO SINCE THE FIRST TIME I MET YA, BUT YER MUCH SMALLER THAN THE PRESENCE I FELT FROM THE MOUNTAIN...

SOMETHIN' ABOUT YA MUSTA CHANGED...

YER REAL UNSTABLE, Y'KNOW.

CHANGED...

NAW, THAT AIN'T TRUE... QUIT SAYIN' THAT STUFF.

...IT'S MY FAULT.

IS IT WHY I COULDN'T BEAT THAT IMPURITY AT THE DINER AND WHY I GOT MY HEAD CUT OFF?

SO IS THAT WHY I'VE BEEN FEELIN' PAIN?

...OH, THAT GUY! THE SWORD THAT DUDE WITH THE SUNGLASSES CUT ME WITH...

THAT WEREN'T NO REGULAR SWORD...

AND ON TOP OF ALL THAT I'VE BEEN FEELIN' KINDA STRANGE LATELY.

...HE MUST KNOW A LOT 'BOUT THINGS LIKE THAT. THAT'S FER SURE.

THAT FELLA MUSTA KNOWN THAT WHEN HE ATTACKED ME.

THERE'S SOMETHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT IT.

I'M A FOOL FOR NOT NOTICIN' EARLIER...!

BUT IT'S PROBABLY EASIER TO TAKE MY HEAD OFF NOW. HA-HA!

THEN WE'LL RUN AWAY!!

AND IF HE CUTS MY HEAD OFF AGAIN, YOU'LL STICK IT BACK ON!

WHAT IF HE ATTACKS US AGAIN...?

GUH-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!

BUT...THIS WON'T DO. I'M STARTIN' TO FEEL FOR 'IM TOO...

THIS BOY REALLY IS DANGEROUS.

MURMUR

MURMUR

MURMUR

HE WAS ALL LIKE, "IT'S BORIN' WITHOUT HIKARU AROUND." SAID IT ABOUT TEN TIMES.

I DID NOT!

HUH?

YOU'D NEVER GUESS IT, BUT MAKI WAS THE MOST WORRIED. CUTE, RIGHT?

I'M SOOO GLAD YER OKAY!

HEY, WHATCHA BEEN WRITIN' ALL THIS TIME?

Novnvki-sama → Grants wishes in exchange for human heads?

DOIN' RESEARCH ON UNUKI-SAN?

SHUT

NOTHIN' SPECIAL.

HUH?

WHAT'D... YOU JUST...?

...WAY BACK WHEN.

IT'S A CODE NAME PEOPLE USED TO USE...

HEH HEH.

I'LL TELL YA ALL ABOUT IT.

A LONG TIME AGO, THIS AREA SUFFERED FROM A BUNCHA EPIDEMICS, LOUSY HARVESTS, AN' ACCIDENTS FOR NO APPARENT REASON.

DESPITE ALL THAT, THE REGION DID WELL ENOUGH FOR ITSELF

APPARENTLY 'COS YA COULD MINE MERCURY 'ROUND THESE PARTS

BUT OVER THE YEARS THERE WAS LESS AND LESS OF IT TO MINE.

...AND SEEIN' AS IT WAS HARD JUST TO SURVIVE, FOLKS TURNED TO ABORTIN' THEIR CHILDREN

AND THEY USED MERCURY TO MAKE A MEDICINE FOR THAT

IT WAS AN ABORTION DRUG—ONE ONLY FOUND 'ROUND HERE

PRETTY SURE THEY CALLED IT "URONUKI MEDICINE"...

...WHICH APPARENTLY MEANT "BABY-KILLIN' MEDICINE."

...UMM, AND

THAT'S THE CODED LANGUAGE FOLKS STARTED USIN'.

...USIN' IT FOR AN ABORTION WAS CALLED "MAKIN' A RETURN TO UNUKI-SAN IN THE MOUNTAINS."

SINCE THE MEDICINE USED MERCURY MINED FROM THE MOUNTAIN...

...AND AFTERWARD, THE EPIDEMICS AN' ALL THAT MYSTERIOUSLY CALMED DOWN.

...BEFORE LONG, THEY STARTED WORSHIPPIN' UNUKI-SAN AS A MOUNTAIN GOD...

...

MERCURY... IS THAT WHERE THE NAME OF THAT OFF-LIMITS AREA, NISAYAMA, CAME FROM?

OH WOW. SOUNDS REAL CURIOUS.

I DON'T 'MEMBER MUCH, BUT WAS I IN THAT MOUNTAIN BACK THEN...?

WHAT? AIN'T NO WAY A GOD LIKE THAT EXISTS.

MAYBE UNUKI-SAN'S TO BLAME FOR HIKARU GOIN' MISSIN' IN NISAYAMA TOO.

WHAT IF IT WERE?

THAT GOD COULD BE CLOSER TO US THAN Y'ALL THINK, Y'KNOW? OOOH, SPOOKY!

LIKE IF IT TOOK SOMEONE'S PLACE OR SOMETHIN'.

WHAT WOULD Y'ALL DO IF IT REALLY WERE CLOSE BY?

THEN I'D BE LIKE, "GIT ON BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN!!" AND SEND THAT THING PACKIN'!

...HUH?

I'D BE ABLE TO TELL RIGHT AWAY.

WHA-

IT'S SCARY TO IMAGINE...

...BUT WHEN THAT SORTA THING HAPPENS, THEY USUALLY END UP EXPOSIN' THEMSELVES AND GOIN' BACK TO WHERE THEY CAME FROM, RIGHT?

HRM ...

WAIT, MAKI...

HOW DO YA KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT ALL THAT?

...OH...

URONUKI-SAMA, UNUKI-SAN, THEN NEXT IS... NOUNUKI-SAMA?

OH? 'COS MY BIG BROTHER'S REALLY INTO OCCULT STUFF.

HE'S STUDYIN' FOLKLORE AT A UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO RIGHT NOW.

I WANNA KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO UNUKI-SAN AFTER THAT.

YA MIND SENDIN' HIM A MINE MESSAGE TO ASK HIM SOME THINGS?

12.42
<3 Aniki

NAAN A PROBLEM

MY BROTHER'S ALWAYS QUICK TO REPLY.

HE WROTE BACK.

UMM...

"BUT FOR SOME REASON, THERE WERE RUMORS THROUGHOUT THE DOMAIN THAT INTERVENING IN THE REGION WOULD GET YOU CURSED.

HE SAYS, "WHEN THE VILLAGE SPLIT UP (AROUND 1700), THE CULT OF UNUKI-SAN WAS *LONG GONE.*

"THAT RELIGION THEN TOOK ROOT HERE, WHICH IS WHY KIBOGAYAMA HAS SO MANY CHURCHES TO THIS DAY."

"AND BECAUSE THE DOMAIN LARGELY LEFT THE REGION ALONE, THE PERSECUTED FOLLOWERS OF ANOTHER RELIGION FLED THEIR HOMES AND SETTLED HERE.

...APPAR-ENTLY.

YEAH... SURE AM.

THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.

Y'ALL SURE ARE CURIOUS 'BOUT THIS STUFF, THOUGH. ARE YA INTO THE OCCULT TOO!?

IS THAT REALLY SO?

THE CULT WAS LOST?

NAME CHANGES ARE PRETTY COMMON.

IF IT DID CHANGE NAMES, IT COULD'VE GONE LIKE...

MAYBE IT WASN'T LOST. MAYBE IT **TRANSFORMED** INSTEAD.

BUT NO ONE WAS OFFERING HEADS TO UNUKI-SAN.

DID IT CHANGE TO THE CULT OF NOUNUKI-SAMA AT SOME POINT, AND THAT'S WHEN THEY STARTED OFFERING HEADS?

THE VILLAGE SPLITTING UP MAY ALSO BE RELATED TO THAT.

THEN THE CULT CONTINUED IN SECRET...

...AND NOUNUKI-SAMA WAS FORGOTTEN...

AS THE VILLAGERS LOST THEIR PLACE OF REFUGE, A NEW RELIGION APPEARED BEFORE THEM AND TOOK ROOT...

BUT NOUNUKI-SAMA BECAME A CURSED GOD BECAUSE OF THE MASS DEATHS IN 1749.

BUT IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN WHY'S THE CULT OF NOUNUKI-SAMA ONLY ACTIVE IN KUBITACHI?

SOME SORT

Long ago the village was formed

↓

The cult of Unuki-san began

↓

Changed to cult of Nounuki-sama

↓

Village split around 1700

↓

Mass deaths in 1749
Cult of Nounuki-sama ends

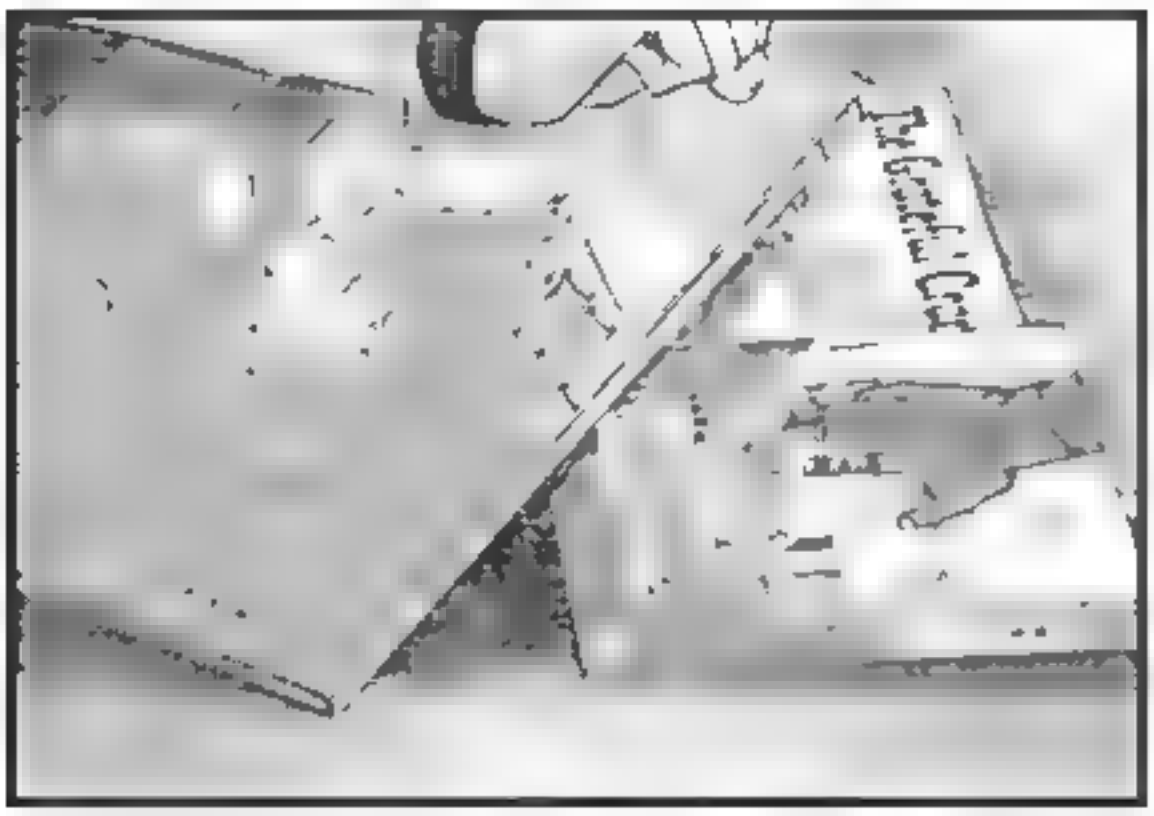
↓

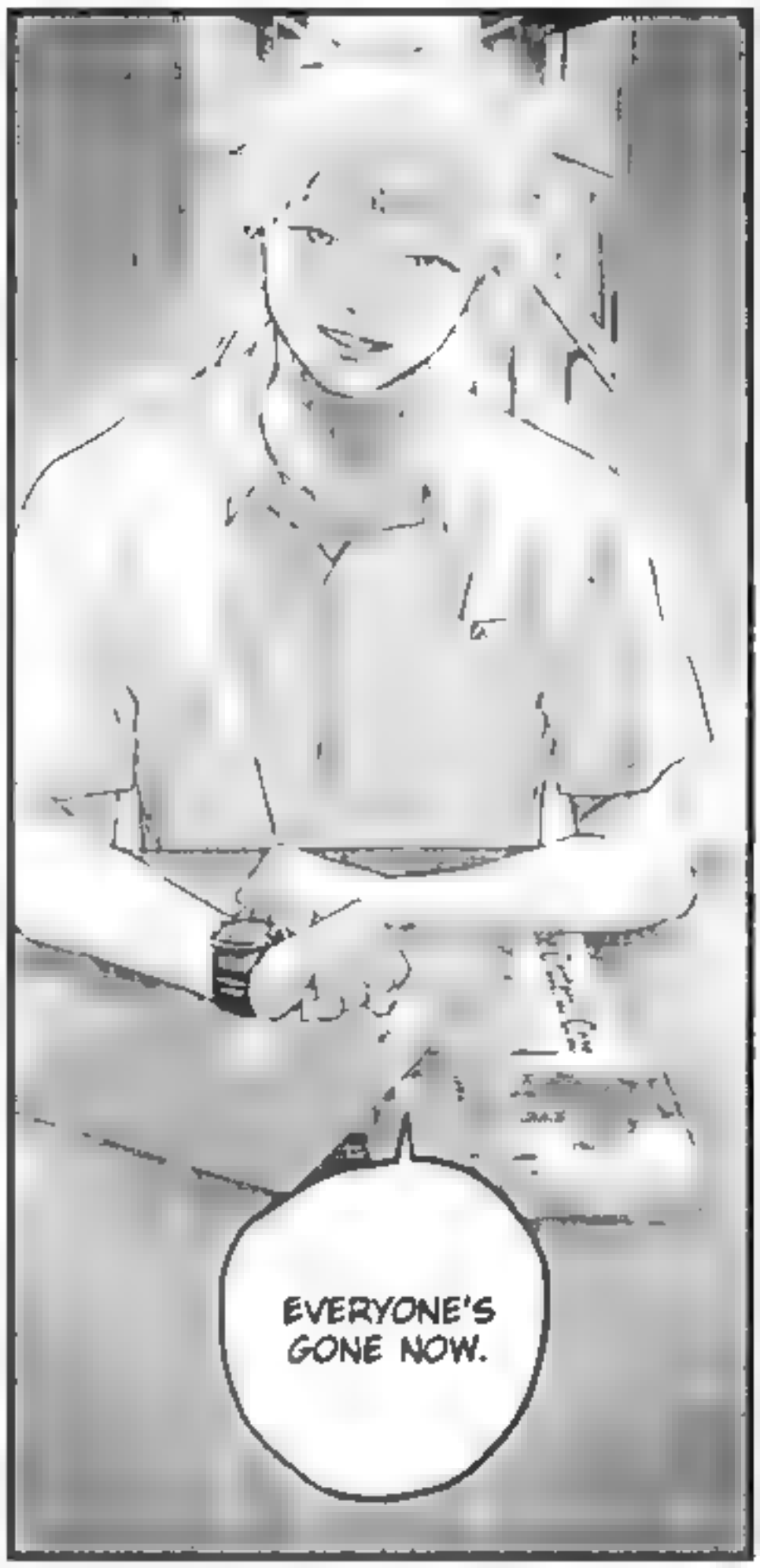
Another religion takes root,
but Nounuki-sama continues
on in Kubitachi

IT'S JUST A THEORY, BUT NOW THAT I KNOW THIS, WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

HEY, YOSHIKI...

VWOOO





SO ARE THE INDOUS THE ONLY ONES WHO USE THE OLD NAME?

THEN UNUKI-SAN AND NOUNUKI-SAMA BEIN' THE SAME SEEMS TO MAKE SENSE.

NOW THAT YA MENTION IT, THAT'S THE NAME MY DADDY AND GRANDPA USED...

...'ROUND THE PART WHERE YOU WERE SAYIN' I STARTED OUT AS "UNUKI-SAN."

PRETTY MUCH...

SPEAKIN' OF, HE STILL AIN'T DONE ANYTHIN', HAS HE?

...BUT I WONDER HOW MUCH THAT FELLA WITH THE SUNGLASSES KNOWS.

I'M DUMB, SO I DUNNO MUCH...

FEELS LIKE THAT'S WHERE WE'LL FIND THE INDOUS' SECRET.

...WE OUGHTTA LOOK INTO THE SHRINE OLD MAN TAKEDA MENTIONED.

BEFORE ANYTHIN' HAPPENS...

I DON'T WANNA THINK ABOUT IT...

WHAT HAPPENED TO OLD MAN TAKEDA AFTER ALL THAT ANYWAY?

.....

IS THE REASON YER WEAK 'COS YOU'VE BEEN SPLIT IN HALF?

THEN I'M GIVIN' THIS BACK.

TAKE IT.

...YEAH, PROLLY.

WORST CASE, MIGHT NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN.

EVEN IF I TAKE IT BACK, WHO KNOWS IF I'LL GO BACK TO NORMAL?

...I WON'T STAB YA.

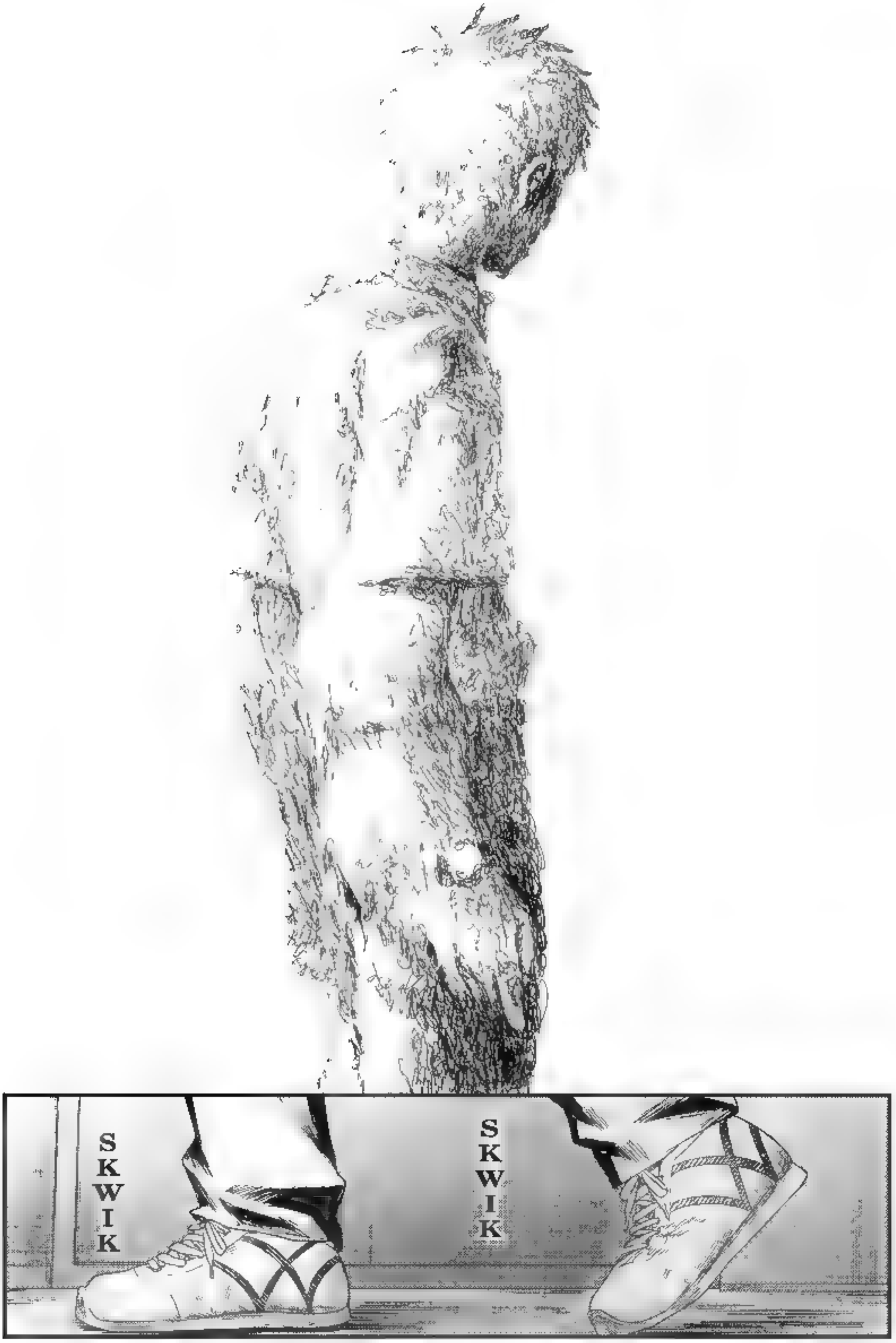
PLUS...

...IF I TAKE THAT BACK, YA MIGHT STAB ME AGAIN, RIGHT?

SOMETHIN' ABOUT YA MUSTA CHANGED...

THROB ズキ…

THROB THROB THROB THROB THROB THROB


SKWIK
SKWIK

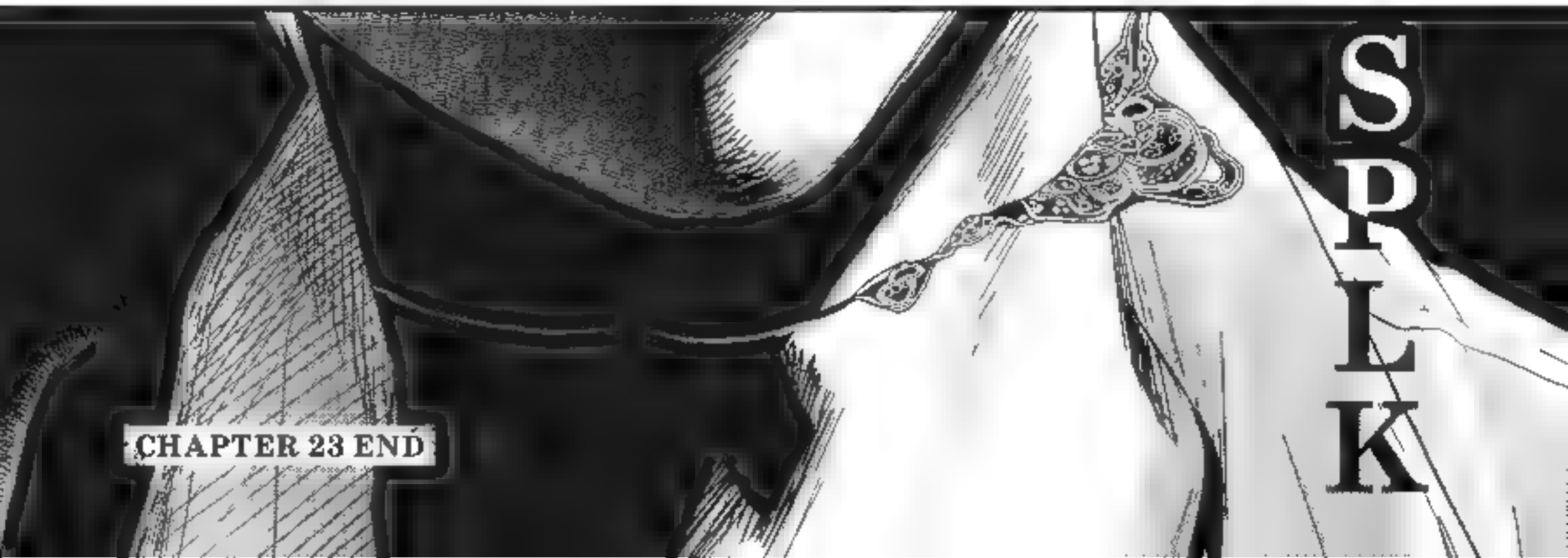
SO IS
THIS WHERE
BEGINS
AGAIN?

IT STILL
HURTS,
DON'T IT?

WHAT ...?

NAW. IT AIN'T THAT.

SCRIBBLE
ADD ME
HERE


CHAPTER 23 END
SRLK

FOR A MOMENT, I WAS FIXIN' TO SLAP SOME SENSE INTO 'IM, BUT. THAT'D BE TOO MUCH. RIGHT?
SLAP
HEY!

MUMBLE, MUMBLE, MUMBLE, MUMBLE, MUMBLE, MUMBLE, MMBL.
YER PRETTY SMART, YOSHIKI. SHOULD I BE THINKIN' SOMETHIN' UP TOO?
SO IN THIS ERA... AND IF SO, THEN IT'S CONSISTENT WITH... MUMBLE, MUMBLE...

CHAPTER 24

HUH?

AH

AH!

IN THIS ISSUE OF THOSE TIMES WHEN I GOTTA RUN.

STEP

STEP

STEP

DASH

SQWIK SQWIK

HIFF!

HAH!

I'LL GO DOWN THOSE STAIRS, AND...

TMP

TMP

COME ON PUT

THERE'RE PEOPLE DOWN THERE. IF SOMEONE SEES HIKARU, THEN...

...YEAH... ALL TH'S TIME, THE FACT THAT HE LOOKS LIKE HIKARU SPARED ME...

I'M GONNA DI—

I'M SCARED.

BI CHATTER

BI CHATTER

I SEE...SO THAT'S HOW "MIXED UP" I'VE GOTTEN.

...DOESN'T-
FEEL
GROSS
TO ME.

HUH...?
SOMEHOW,
THIS...

.....

HIKARU.

...

HUH?

HUH?

TMP

.....

.....

...

LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN MAIN-TAINED TOO...

THE SHRINE... REALLY EXISTS...

HEY

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

D'YOU KNOW HOW MANY TIMES YOU'VE TRIED TO KILL ME ALREADY?

IT'S NOTHIN' TO ME AT THIS POINT.

'ERE.

MY GRANDPA SLEEPS EARLY, SO I SNUCK IT OFF 'IM.

HE'S BLUFF-IN'.

GOT THE KEY TO THE SHRINE?

'SIDES, I STABBED YOU TOO, SO WE'RE EVEN, RIGHT?

I CAN'T GET HUNG UP ON EVERY LITTLE THING LIKE THAT.

CRACK

IT WORKS.

IT'S PITCH-BLACK IN THERE. CAN'T SEE A THING.

FLASH!!

OH RIGHT.

HIKARU, THE FLASH-LIGHT.

WHAT THE —!? HUMAN HEADS!?

WAH!

WHY... ARE THESE THINGS HERE...?

SHRF

YER TOUCH-IN' 'EM!?

NAW... LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ACTUALLY MADE OF WOOD.

...HURTS...!

KW-EE-LEN

UGH!

SOME-THIN'...

WHY'RE THERE SO MANY OF 'EM?

...THESE FACES?

DADDY, WHAT ARE...

NAW NOT REALLY

I'M NEARLY THROUGH WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Y'KNOW?

YA SCARED?

LOTTA BAD THINGS BEEN HAPPENIN' TO THIS LAND SINCE WAY BACK WHEN.

AN' 'COS OF THAT, FOLKS 'ROUND HERE WERE ESPECIALLY POOR AND HAD IT REAL TOUGH.

THEY'RE "OKUBI-SAMA"— HEADS THAT WERE OFFERED UP TO UNUKI-SAMA.

ASKIN' FOR GOOD HARVESTS AN' TO WARD OFF DISEASE AN' SUCH...

THAT'S WHY THEY OFFERED UP THEM HEADS TO UNUKI-SAMA AND MADE ALL SORTSA WISHES...

SO WE CARVE REPLACEMENTS AND ENSHRINE 'EM HERE.

WHEN THEY MADE THEIR OFFERINGS, THEM HEADS WOULD DISAPPEAR RIGHT ON THE SPOT.

WE'VE BEEN TAKIN' CARE OF THIS SHRINE—OR "DOU," AS IT'S CALLED—FOR GENERATIONS, AN' THAT'S WHY WE'RE THE "INDOUS."

OH WOW.

THAT'S RIGHT

SO ALL THESE HEADS BELONG TO DEAD PEOPLE?

TO MAKE THAT EASY, THE VILLAGE GOT SPLIT UP INTO FIVE PARTS.

THE REST OF THE BODY HAS TO BE BURIED AS FAR AWAY FROM THE HEAD AS POSSIBLE.

FUNNY, AIN'T IT?

THEN, BY CHANCE, THE PIECES ENDED UP TAKIN' THE SHAPE OF A HUMAN.

NO ONE REALLY KNOWS TO THIS DAY

BEATS ME

WHY FOLKS HAD TO BURY THEM PARTS SO FAR FROM EACH OTHER IN THE FIRST PLACE...

WHY? IT'S CREEPY...

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

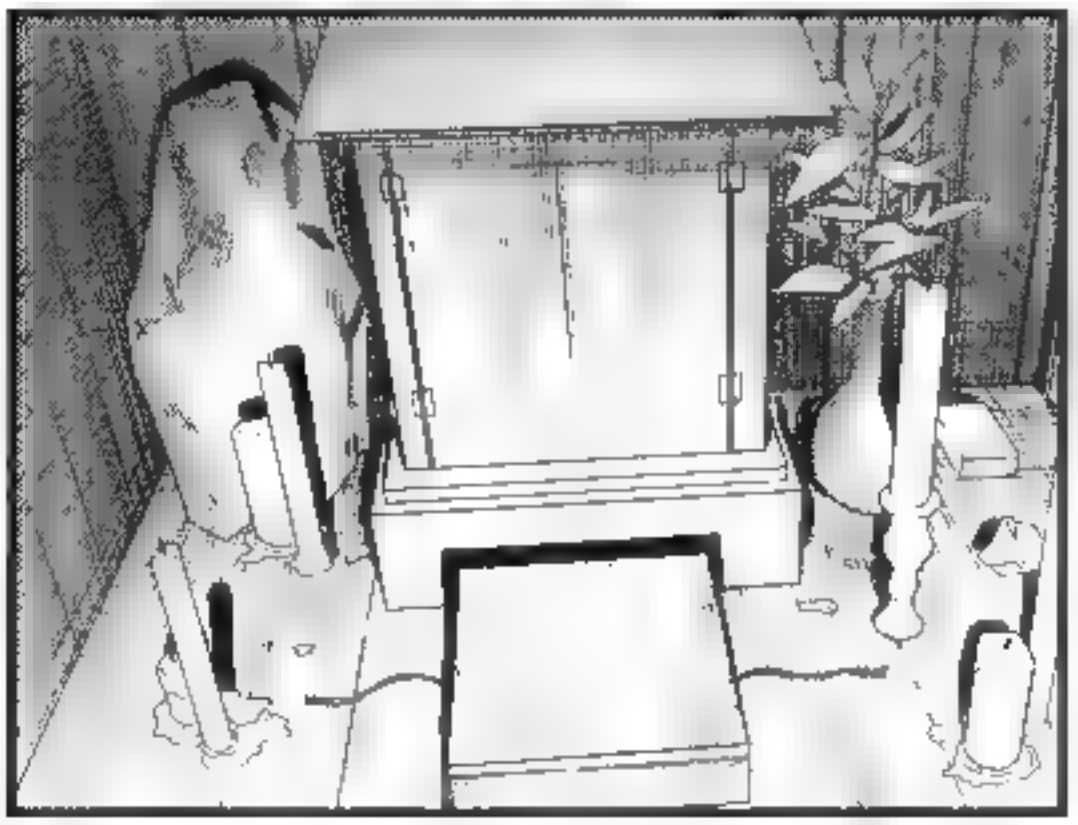
NOT JUST THAT MONK NEITHER. THEY KILLED SCORES OF OTHERS AN'

...SO THEY MURDERED PEOPLE?

FAMILY'S SIN AS WELL...

YOU CAN'T EVER FORGET THAT, Y'HEAR?

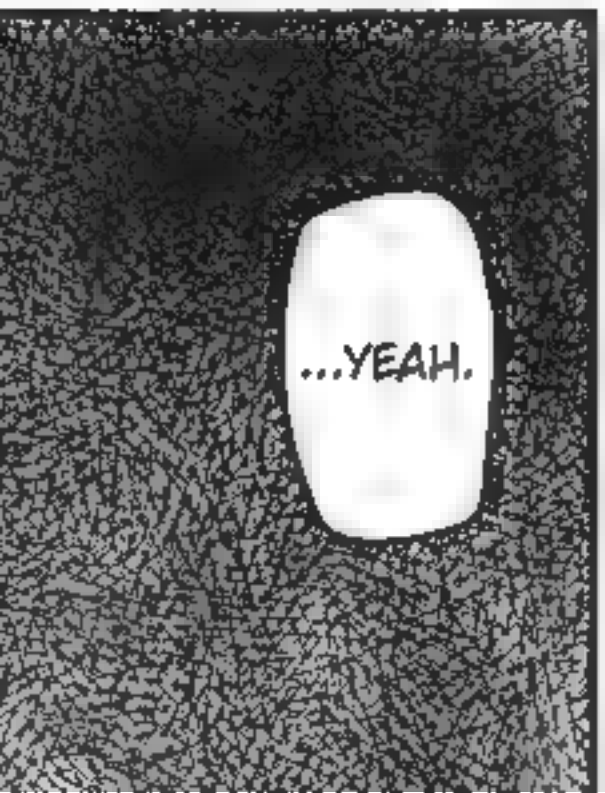
TMP



.....

...DID YOU...
"HICHI-SAN" USED TO BE IN HERE.

COURSE IT'S GONE...


...YEAH.

...REMEMBER SOMETHIN'?

I DON'T NEED HEADS OR NOTHIN' TO GRANT WISHES, THOUGH.

SO WHY DO ALL THAT?

COURSE THEY'D... HIDE THAT...

...HA HA.

...SO THE VILLAGE WAS JUST FULL OF MURDERERS?

...CAN'T RECALL... THAT PART'S STILL PRETTY FUZZY.

SO WHAT EXACTLY WAS THE INDOUS' SIN ANYWAY...?

...NOT SURE THERE'S ANYONE ELSE WHO WAS CLOSE TO HIKARU'S DADDY AND MIGHT KNOW MORE...

...NO, THERE MIGHT BE...ONE PERSON... BUT...

Now, let's sing the school anthem.

...MOUN-
TAINS,
MOUNT
TEN-
BAAAN
...

SOARING
H'IIGH,
ABOVE
THE
BLUILLE
...

HONESTLY,
IT SEEMS
PRETTY
FITTING...

BUT IT
KINDA MAKES
SENSE.

SOUNDS
LIKE LOTSA
LIVES WERE
OFFERED UP
TO ME.

...WILL WE FIND A WAY TO REDUCE THE IMPURITIES HERE?

IF WE END UP FIGURIN' OUT WHAT NOUNUKI-SAMA IS...

THE IMPURITIES AIN'T THE MOST DANGEROUS THING FOR YOSHIKI. IT'S...

AND WOULD I BE ABLE TO KEEP STAYIN' HERE LIKE THIS?

PRESS

RATTLE

RATTLE

THEY'LL LET IT GO, LONG AS I SAY I WAS TAKIN' A DUMP.

...SNEAKY, AREN'T YA? SKIPPIN' THE CEREMONY.

SUMMER BREAK'S TOMOR-ROW, HUH?

I'LL GET IT DONE IN THE FIRST WEEK.

YUU-CHAN ALWAYS DOES IT THROUGH TEARS ON THE LAST DAY OF BREAK. HA-HA!

SURE IS.

YA GONNA DO THE HOME-WORK?

HA HA!

STUDYIN'S FUN.

RECKON I SHOULD DO IT TOO.

...

YA REALLY AIN'T HIKARU, HUH?

HM?

UM, SO...

I SAW YA ON THE SECOND FLOOR LANDIN' BEFORE.

YEAH.

YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T GO SAYIN' THAT STUFF TO ME DIRECTLY...

IT'S DOWN-RIGHT DUMB.

ASAKO...

...THERE YA GO AGAIN.

SCRATCH SCRATCH

... AW, DANG ...

NOT TO NO ONE.

I WON'T. NOT A WORD.

YA GONNA TELL?

I CAN'T DO THAT..

IT'S ALL JUS' ...

...SO STRANGE ...

IT'S SCARY AN' STRANGE TO KNOW Y'AINT THE REAL HIKARU.

AN' YOSHIKI ACTIN' LIKE NOTHIN'S CHANGED IS ALSO... STRANGE.

OH.

OH YEAH, THAT...

EVEN AFTER I MESSED UP YER RIGHT EAR?

AN' THAT I WON'T KILL NO ONE ELSE...

SORRY 'BOUT THAT.

I PROMISED YOSHIKI I WON'T DO NOTHIN' TO YOU NO MORE.

BUT Y'KNOW WHAT?

I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO HATE YA AS THIS "HIKARU" AT ALL.

NO.

...THIS BODY'S JUST A CORPSE.

HEY.

IS THE REAL HIKARU ALIVE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE?

AH HA HA...

YA REALLY AIN'T HUMAN, ARE YA?

I SEE.

SNIFF!

I SORT OF

FIG-URED

UNH...

NNNGH...

GO GO

RUB

RUB

NGH...

UAAAH...

AN' 'COS I'M HERE, NO ONE'LL MOURN LIKE HER.

THE REAL HIKARU SHOULDA BEEN MOURNED LIKE THIS.

AH. RIGHT.

SORRY.

...BUT IF I WEREN'T HERE, YOSHIKI WOULD PROLLY BE MOURNIN' WITH EVERYONE ELSE, AND HE'D BE SUFFERIN' LESS THAN HE IS NOW.

THAT'S WHAT HIKARU WISHED FOR...

...AND ENJOY THEM-SELVES...

...THINK ABOUT COLLEGE AN' SUCH...

THEN MAYBE THEY'D BE ABLE TO MOVE ON WITH THEIR LIVES...

RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

AH!

BZZH BZZH BZZH

...HEY, SO...

HEY.

LOOKS LIKE RAIN. LET'S HURRY ON HOME.

YER ASKIN' ME THAT NOW?

FLAP FLAP FLAP

WHAT KINDA GUY WAS HIKARU?

WELL, HIKARU WAS

WHAT KINDA GUY WAS HE?

HIKARU ISHIN WAS LIKE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN A MANGA

ER×MASTER

HE COULD EASILY STRIKE UP CONVERSATION WITH ANYONE.

HE WAS A FAST RUNNER AND BAD AT SCHOOL

BUT PEOPLE STILL LIKED HIM

HE WASN'T ESPECIALLY POLITE THOUGH SO HE HAD A HARD TIME WITH OTHER STUDENTS

BUT THEN SHE'D SUDDENLY START GOIN' OUT WITH SOME OTHER GUY.

WHEN THERE WERE RUMORS THAT A GIRL LIKED HIM...

HE'D GET ALL NERVOUS AND ACT WEIRD SHE MIGHT CON-FESS

...AND SAID IT WAS BECAUSE SHE LOOKED LIKE LIN XIANG FROM MASTER • MASTER.

BEFORE HE DIED, HE WAS SWEET ON SAITOU-SAN FROM CLASS B...

HE WASN'T PICKY WITH FOOD IF IT WAS EDIBLE, HE'D EAT IT.

HE USUALLY FELL ASLEEP DURING MOVIES

HE WAS ALWAYS STRONG HE DIDN'T WORRY LIKE ME.

I NEVER SAW HIM CRY BEFORE.

AN' HE DIDN'T CRY.

BUT I WONDER IF HE REALLY WANTED TO.

...COURSE I DO.

DO YOU MISS HIKARU?

HUH?

SORRY, YOSHIKI. GO ON WITHOUT ME.

YEAH ...

WHY?

NO REASON! I'LL HEAD HOME IN JUST A BIT!

RMBL RMBL RMBL RMBL...

FSH

IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I INITIATED A CONVERSATION WITH HIM.

HAAAH

KNOCK

KNOCK

BUT IF ANYONE KNOWS ABOUT THE INDOUS... IT'S HIM.

GCHAK

...HEY, DAD?

FSH

YO-SHIKI.

DING-DONG

WHO COULD THAT BE IN THIS RAIN?

Salu-rated toll has been cited as

GCHAK

HI チャ

HOLD ON I'M COMIN'.

FSH

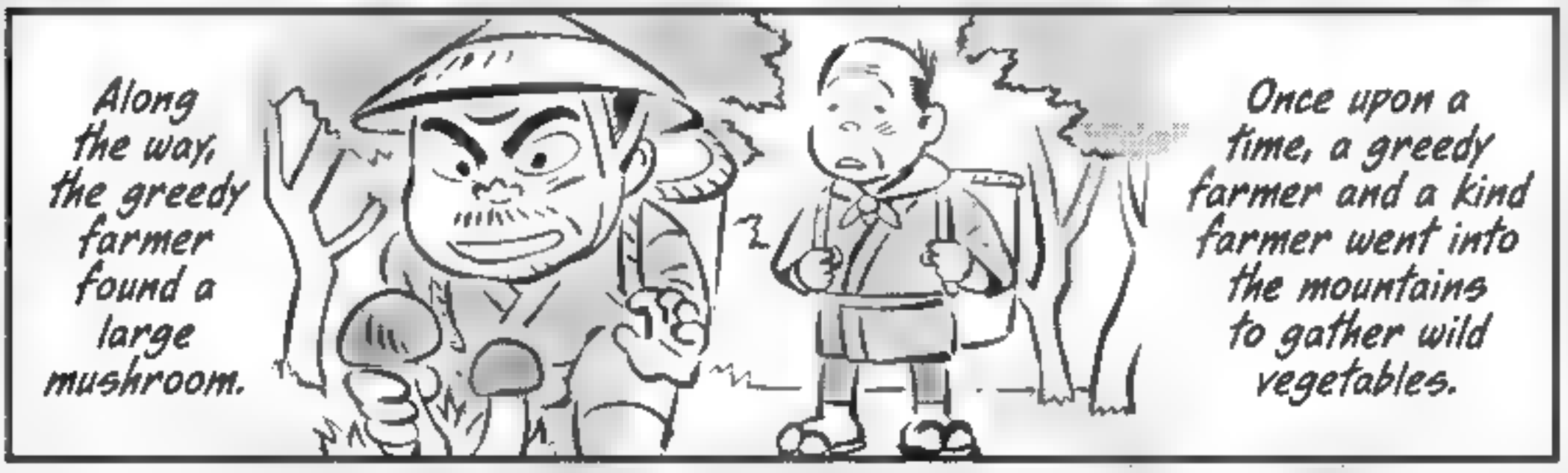
HIKARU-
KUN...

CHAPTER 24 END

IF HIKARU HADN'T SPLIT
HIMSELF IN HALF, YOSHIKI
WOULD PROBABLY BE DEAD

I'M GONNA TURN INTO A WATERMELON MAN.
WHEN HIKARU CRIED, YOSHIKI USUALLY CRIED EVEN MORE, SO HE DOESN'T REALLY REMEMBER HIKARU CRYING.
NO, ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE HIKARU DID CRY SOMETIMES WHEN WE WERE LITTLE...

THE TALE OF THE FARMER'S HEAD


Along the way, the greedy farmer found a large mushroom.
Once upon a time, a greedy farmer and a kind farmer went into the mountains to gather wild vegetables.
Searching for a hiding spot, he stuck his head into a hole in the mountain, and when he did...
"This is mine," the greedy farmer said, and he tried to hide the mushroom.
Frightened, the kind farmer ran back to the village as fast as he could.
...his head fell off right into the hole.
...was filled with rice and a bounty of delicious ingredients.
-And when he arrived back home, he was surprised to find that his basket...

CHAPTER 25

"...AND SINCE THE GOD'S HUNGER HAD BEEN SATISFIED, IT REWARDED THE FARMER.

"AND THE FARMER LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER."

"IT TURNS OUT THAT HOLE WAS THE MOUTH OF A HUNGRY GOD...

BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH

10

SHUT

BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH BZZHH

I AM NOT SO SURE MYSELF

WHAT KIND OF STORY IS THAT ?

FISH

FSH

I SEE.

. ALL RIGHT, I GUESS

...HOW'S SCHOOL THESE DAYS?

I WANNA ASK YOU ABOUT HIKARU'S DADDY...

WELL...

IS THERE... SOMETHIN' ON YER MIND...?

WHAT WAS THEIR "SIN"...?

WHAT'D THE INDOUS DO YEARS AN' YEARS AGO?

WHAT ABOUT 'IM...?

FSH

I FOUND OUT. ON MY OWN.

'COS IT'S SOMETHING I NEED TO KNOW NOW.

WHO TOLD YA ABOUT THAT?

WHY'S THAT?

THAT'S WHAT WE DISCUSSED, BUT...

..DIDN'T WANNA BURDEN OUR SONS WITH THIS MESS...

...KOUHEI AND I...

...TO "APOLOGIZE"... AND TO ASK THE GOD NOT TO LEAVE THE MOUNTAIN.

ABOUT EVERY FIVE YEARS, A MALE MEMBER OF THE INDOU FAMILY GOES TO THAT MOUNTAIN...

.....

ONE TIME I ASKED KOUHEI...

...WHAT THE INDOUS HAD DONE.

'COS THE INDOUS DID SOMETHING...

...WHEN THE MASS DEATHS HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO...

THE REASON FOLKS HATE THE INDOUS, HUH?

...After the bubble burst... the clubs in Ginza...

OKAY

SO THE YOUNG MASTER WENT INTO THE MOUNTAIN TO OFFER HER UP.

WELL, Y'SEE, IT'S ALL 'COS THE YOUNG MASTER OF THE INDOU HOUSEHOLD BACK THEN...

AN' WHAT D'YOU THINK HE WISHED FOR?

...HAD A WIFE WHO FELL ILL IN AN EPIDEMIC AND WAS TURNED INTO A HEAD FOR OFFERIN'.

"TAKE ANY OTHER HEAD YA LIKE, LONG AS IT'S NOT FROM ONE OF THE INDOUS!"

HE GOES, "BRING MY WIFE BACK TO LIFE!"

HA HA!

AN' AFTER THAT...

AH..

DANG

THAT'S, UH..

AND IN EXCHANGE...

...SHE CAME RIGHT BACK TO LIFE!!

BEFORE THE END OF THAT DAY, ONE-THIRD OF THE VILLAGE HAD DIED MYSTERIOUSLY.

HANG-MOS.

FOLKS CUTTIN' OFF THEIR FAMILY'S HEADS AN' THEN KILLIN' THEMSELVES.

HEADS GETTING TRAMPLED BY HORSES.

SOME PEOPLE EVEN JUST TURNED 'ROUND AN' SAW FOLKS WITH NO HEADS.

YEP.

COURSE, THERE WERE NO DEATHS FOR THE INDIANS

...BUT LIVIN' THAT WAY CAUSED HER TERRIBLE SUFFERIN', AN' SHE DIED LATER THAT NIGHT.

.. STAYED ALIVE AS A HEAD ..

AN' THE WIFE WHO CAME BACK TO LIFE..

...AND— STRANGER STILL— THE VILLAGE HAD BUMPER CROPS AND FEWER EPIDEMICS AFTER THAT.

THEN THE MYSTERIOUS DEATHS STOPPED...

. NOTHIN' REALLY EVER HAPPENED...

I HEARD THAT UNTIL THEN, NO MATTER HOW MANY HEADS THEY OFFERED UP...

TO BE FAIR, MY ANCESTORS WERE PRETTY UNLUCKY ..

WHAT!?

HER NAME'S HICHI INDOU.

...SO THE INDOUS GOTTA KEEP GOIN' TO THE MOUNTAIN.

WHO KNOWS?

BUT THAT WIFE'S HEAD IS STILL AROUND...

HOW MUCH OF THAT IS EVEN TRUE?

...SAYIN' STUFF LIKE THAT WITHOUT BATTIN' AN EYE.

YA DON'T THINK IT'S PRETTY OUT THERE...?

YER ALWAYS...

WAY I HEAR IT, EVEN WHEN WE RETURN HER TO THE MOUNTAIN, SHE SOMEHOW ALWAYS COMES BACK TO US.

...AND SOMETHIN' WE GOTTA TELL OUR KIDS ABOUT...

NAW, IT'S NOT THAT...

IT'S JUST A BURDEN I GOTTA CARRY...

YUKI-CHAN AGAIN?

'COS OF WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE INDOU'S WAY BACK.

THEY'RE ALWAYS TELLIN' US, "IF YA GOT SOMEONE SPECIAL, YA GOTTA MARRY 'EM QUICK-LIKE AND MAKE 'EM AN INDOU."

THAT'S RIGHT!!

THAT'S WHY I WANNA GET HITCHED WITH YUKI-NEE ALREADY!!

I GOTTA PROTECT YUKI-NEE!

IF THEY'RE AN INDOU, THEY WON'T GET TAKEN AWAY BY AN ANGRY UNUKI-SAMA.

SHUT UP!

WHY'RE YA KEEPIN' TRACK OF THAT!?

SHE'S REJECTED YA ELEVEN TIMES NOW. YER SOME SORTA CREEP, AIN'T YA?

BEFORE HE DIED, KOUHEI HAD IT OUT WITH THE ELDERS 'COS HE SAID HE WANTED THE RITUAL TO END WITH HIM.

HE SAID, "UNUKI-SAMA AIN'T WHAT Y'ALL THINK IT IS. THE RITUAL'S POINTLESS."

THEN NEXT THING YA KNOW, HE DIED IN AN ACCIDENT.

GOTTA WONDER IF IT REALLY WAS AN ACCIDENT, THOUGH...

ANYTHIN' THAT WAS GOOD ABOUT THIS VILLAGE DIED WITH HIM...

...IS WHAT IT FELT LIKE...

...WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YA WHEN HIKARU'S DADDY DIED?

...HEY, DAD...

...

I HATE HOW WE'RE SO ALIKE...

YOSHIKI.

YER NOTHIN' LIKE ME.

YOU'LL BE A BETTER PERSON THAN YER OLD MAN.

YA GOT YER MOTHER'S STRENGTH AN' KINDNESS...

WHY DON'T YA EVER HAVE A REAL CONVERSATION WITH HER?

...TELL MOM THAT.

FEELS LIKE I MIGHT LOSE MY PLACE IN THIS HOUSE BEFORE LONG.

...I'M SCARED TO. YER MOM'S SO STRONG.

PEOPLE CLING TO THE THINGS THEY'VE BEEN MISSIN'.

THAT'S DUMB.

AND FOLKS WHO GET ATTACHED TO A PLACE PROB'LY NEVER HAD A PLACE TO CALL THEIR OWN.

FOLKS STARVED FOR LOVE CRAVE IT EXCESSIVELY.

FOLKS WHO CAN'T GET ENOUGH TO EAT BECOME GLUTTONS FOR FOOD.

.. IS HAVIN' A "PLACE" REALLY SO IMPORTANT?

...

OUGHTTA HAVE A PROPER TALK.

RECKON YER MOM AND I...

MAYBE IT'S THE SAME FOR HIKARU...

OH, YEAH...

FEEL FREE TO READ 'EM IF YA LIKE.

HEY, DAD?

...YA SURE GOT A LOTTA BOOKS.

YEAH

...THANKS

HEY, MOM YOSHIKI AN' DADRE TALKIN' TO EACH OTHER

WHAT'S FOR DINNER TONIGHT?

HAAH . HE'S ALWAYS QUICK TO PUT ON A GOOD FACE WITH YOU KIDS.

HUH

GINGER PORK.

WAIT, THAT'S DAD'S FAVORITE, ISN'T IT...?

THNK
コト

HE'S A MAJIRIMONO NOW.

ONCE THAT HAPPENS, THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THEM AN' THE OTHER SIDE BLURS...

IT'S A RARITY, BUT WHEN SOMETHIN' FROM THE OTHER SIDE INTERFERES WITH SOMEONE HERE...

...THAT PERSON'S SOUL CAN GET MIXED UP WITH ELEMENTS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

WHAT'S A MAJIRI-MONO?

ONCE THOSE THINGS ARE IN REACH, THEY ONLY WANNA GET CLOSER.

...AND IMPURITIES START FLOCKIN' TO THEM.

...WILL IT BE BAD FOR YOSHIKI?

IF HE GETS ANY MORE MIXED UP THAN HE ALREADY IS...

I USED TO DO EVERYTHIN' I COULD TO PROTECT MY SON FROM 'EM, SINCE HE'S A MAJIRIMONO...

...TO BE HONEST, I DON'T HAVE A GOOD HANDLE ON HUMAN EMOTIONS.

I DON'T EVEN WANNA IMAGINE THAT.

I KNOW WHAT A SOUL IS, BUT I DON'T MUCH UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF A "LIFE."

I JUST CAN'T GET... WHAT ANY OF THOSE THINGS REALLY MEAN.

HUMANS'RE COMPLICATED... WITH YER ROMANCE, AN' FRIENDSHIP, AN' LOVE FOR YER FAMILY AN' ALL...

HE TOLD ME I DON'T GOTTA UNDERSTAND THOSE THINGS, AN' I DON'T NEED TO BE HUMAN.

BUT YOSHIKI...

BUT ME BEIN' HERE IS ONLY MAKIN' THINGS WORSE...

LATELY, I'VE HAD MOMENTS WHEN I CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF.

THAT'S WHY I...DON'T WANNA HURT YOSHIKI.

MAYBE YER INSTINCTIVELY INTERFERIN' WITH TSUJINAKA-KUN...

...LIKE SOME WEAKENED ANIMAL GOIN' BERSERK...

ALL 'COS I'M WEAK NOW?

...I'M GONNA LOSE TO THAT "INSTINCT" AN' TAKE YOSHIKI'S SOUL...

WELL... EITHER WAY, EVENTUALLY...

I RECKON THAT'S YER... NATURE.

IF ANYTHIN' GOES WRONG, HE'S POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY EVERYTHIN'.

THIS BOY'S TERRIFYIN'.

BUT HE SAYS HE WANTS TO STAY AND PROTECT HIS PLACE HERE.

IT'S NOT LIKE I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEAS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH HIM.

UM, SO...

...WOULD IT FIX EVERYTHIN' IF I WENT BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN?

WOULD EVERYTHING BE SAFE AND WOULD EVERYTHIN GO BACK TO HOW IT WAS BEFORE?

WOULD THERE BE FEWER IMPURITIES THEN?

TICK TOCK TICK TOCK TICK TOCK

A LID THAT DON'T FIT PERFECTLY IS STILL BETTER THAN NO LID AT ALL.

BUT IT MIGHT MAKE THINGS A LITTLE BETTER.

I...

DON'T KNOW

THERE MIGHT BE OTHER WAYS..

BUT IT AIN'T EXACTLY A SUREFIRE SOLUTION...

I'M A MONSTER, AFTER ALL. I CAN HANDLE IT...

.....

IT'S TOTALLY FINE

.....

SNIFF

SNIFF

WHY ?

THIS SUCKS

SNIFF

WHY ?

NNH

NNH

YO-SHIKI

UNH

NNH

I DON'T WANNA BE ALONE

3:53 PM

F^O
J-P

MOUNTAINSIDE ECOSYSTEMS
DEALING WITH
AVOIDING FOR THE WEB
THE HISTORY OF WAR

ANYTHING WILL DO. I JUST NEED SOME SORTA CLUE...

DOESN'T SEEM LIKE I'LL FIND ANYTHIN' USEFUL HERE.

CLICK

TO SUMMARIZE ALL I'VE LEARNED SO FAR...

THE SIN COMMITTED BY THE INDOU HEIR...

...WAS SACRIFICING VILLAGERS OUTSIDE THEIR FAMILY TO BRING HIS WIFE BACK TO LIFE.

AS A RESULT, A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PEOPLE DIED.

The cult of Unuki-san forms

↓

changed to the cult of Nounuki-sama = Hikaru

- A local cult born from hardship
- God that grants wishes when offered heads
- Offered heads disappear, replacement heads are carved and enshrined in a dou-style shrine
- The village was split up to bury the dismembered body parts of sacrifices as far away as possible from each other

↓

"Mass death" incident (1749)

- Caused by an ancestor of the Indous
  - Wish that went too far → Wife's revival
- Afterward, the village became peaceful
- Since then, it's customary for Indou men to perform a ritual in the mountain using "Hichi-san"

BEIN' DEAD, BEIN' ALIVE...IS THERE REALLY THAT BIG A DIFFERENCE?

THAT WOULD SURELY HAVE THE VILLAGERS THINKIN' NOUNUKI-SAMA WAS A "CURSED GOD."

AN' THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MASS DEATHS IS THAT IT WASN'T A FAMINE BUT MYSTERIOUS DEATHS...

BUT IT'S WEIRD.

AFTER THAT, THE VILLAGE PROBABLY STABILIZED BECAUSE THERE WERE FEWER IMPURITIES...

...

WHY DID A WISH GET GRANTED ONLY AT THAT TIME WHEN THE MASS DEATHS OCCURRED?

WHAT WAS GOIN' ON BEFORE THE MASS DEATHS?

WHILE NOUNUKI-SAMA, A.K.A. HIKARU, WAS IN THE MOUNTAIN, THE IMPURITIES SHOULD'VE GATHERED THERE, KEEPING THE VILLAGE SAFE.

...NOTHIN' HAD ACTUALLY HAPPENED NO MATTER HOW MANY HEADS THEY OFFERED UP.

I'M ALSO CURIOUS ABOUT WHY, BEFORE THE MASS DEATHS OCCURRED...

I DON'T GET WHY THERE'RE SO MANY IMPURITIES 'ROUND THESE PARTS TO BEGIN WITH...

CREAK

HAAH ..

I'M GOIN' BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN! HA-HA!

WELL, YOSHIKI!

THAT'S THE ONE THING I CAN'T DEAL WITH.

THAT'S A NO-GO FOR ME.

WITHOUT KNOWING THE REASON FOR THAT, 'IN THE END ..

THUD

THUD

…ﾌﾑｳ…

"LEONARDO RAFAEL…

A PAINTER FROM THE RENAISSANCE ERA.

DIED IN 1520."

THE ART OF RAPHAELLI

AN ART BOOK…?

THESE PAGES MUST BE HIS ROUGH SKETCHES.

HM?

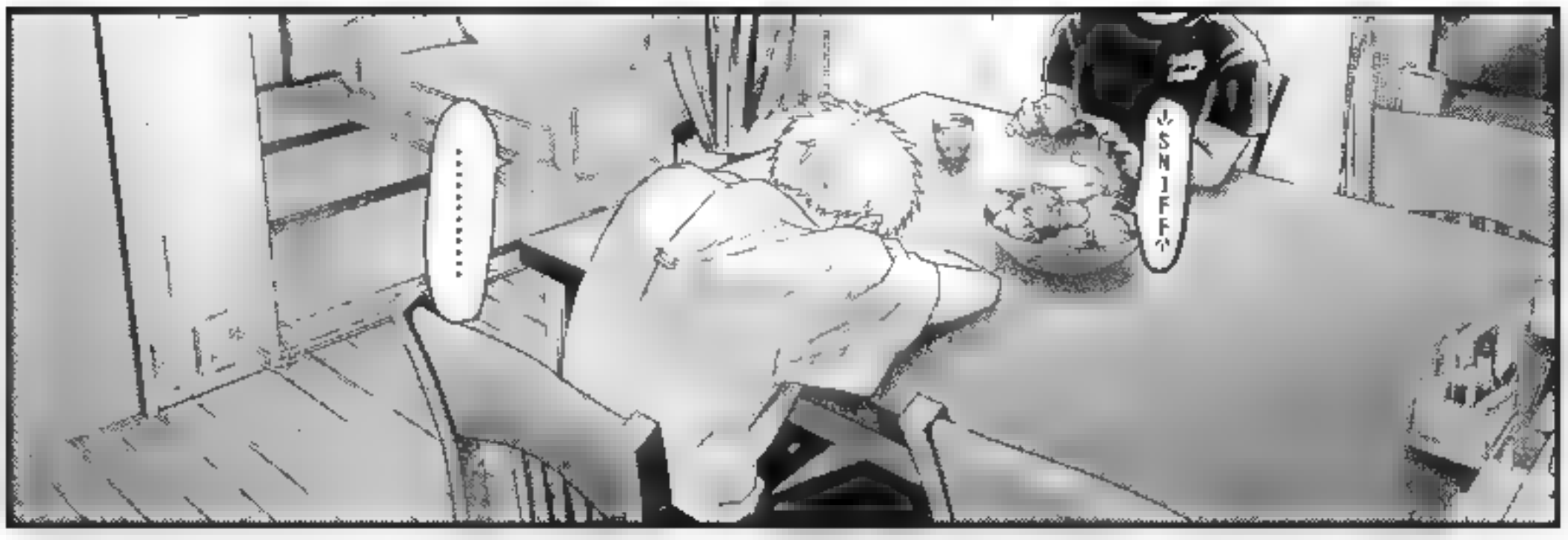
…ﾊｯ…!!

THESE PAINTINGS ARE BEAUTIFUL…

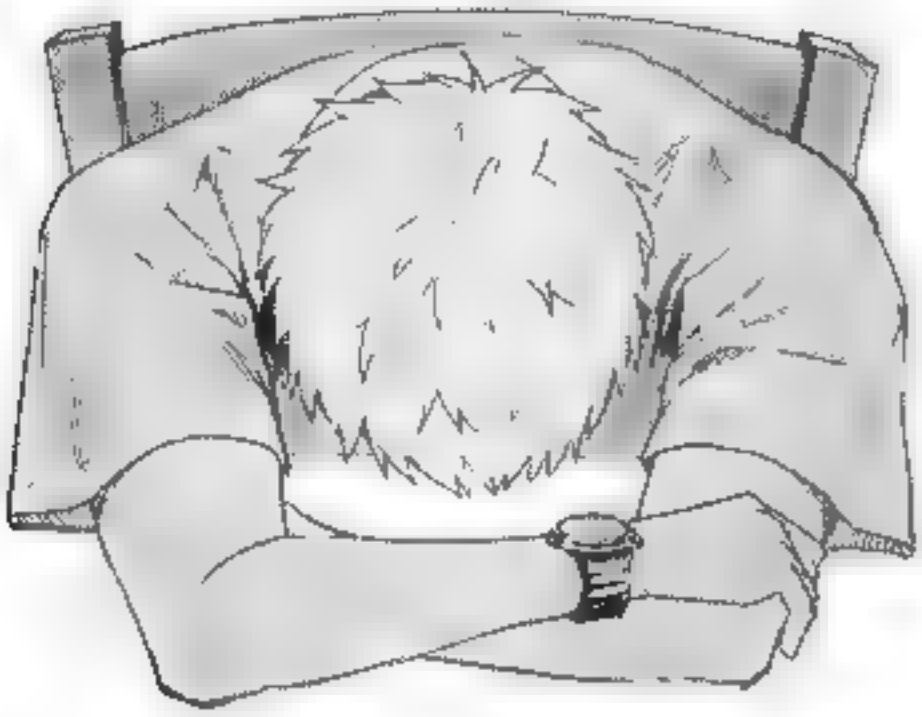
「地獄のスケッチ」

A Sketch of Gehenna - 1519

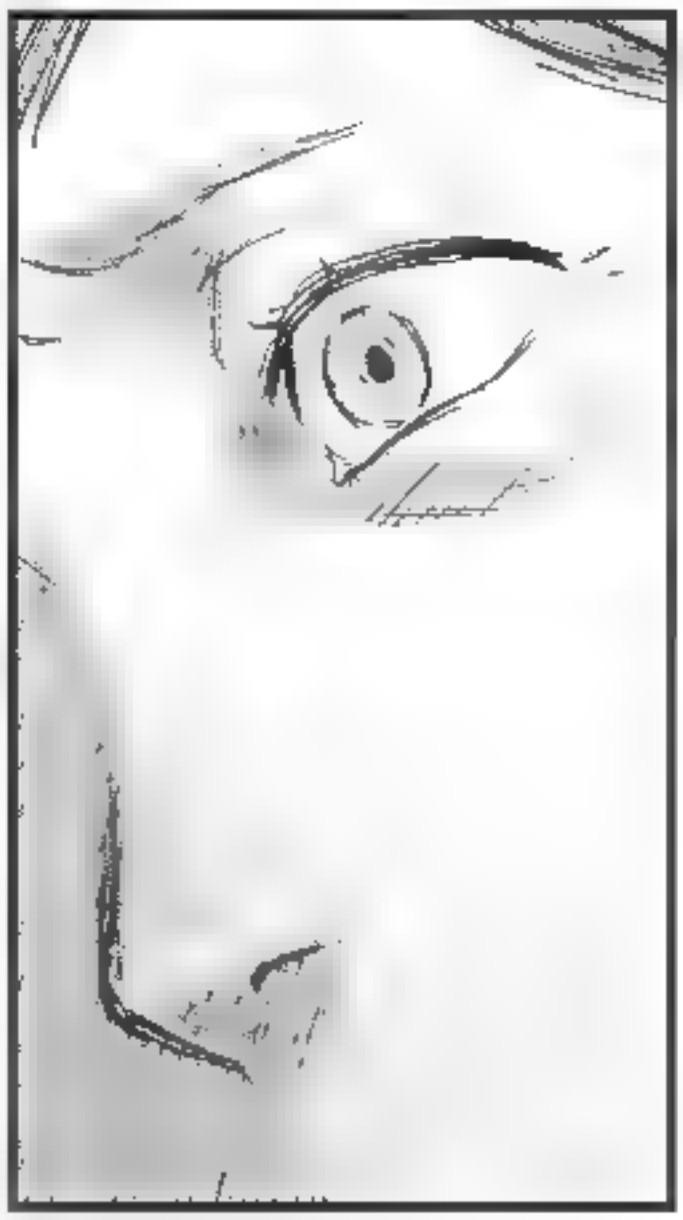
THIS IS...



THIS IS TOO CRUEL FOR A CHILD LIKE HIM...IF HE COULD JUST STAY LIKE THIS A LITTLE LONGER...



IT'S BARELY BEEN A YEAR SINCE HE WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD.



I'M GOING TO PEEL HIM AWAY FROM THIS BODY!

IN HIS CURRENT STATE

I'LL JUST TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY...

AND IF IT WOULD SPARE TSUBAKI-KUN

IF THIS BOY'S SUFFERING...

...AND TAKE CARE OF HIKARU-KUN...

CHAPTER 25 END

HIKARU'S FATHER
KOUHEI INDOU

YOSHIKI WAS MORE ATTACHED TO HIM THAN HIS OWN FATHER. HE WAS THE TYPE OF GUY WHO WOULD PLAY TAG WITH KIDS UNTIL THEY CRIED, AND HE WOULD PUT BOOGERS ON YOU IF HE CAUGHT YOU, SO YOSHIKI AND H KARU WOULD RUN AWAY FROM HIM LIKE THEIR LIVES DEPENDED ON IT

YOSHIKI TAKES AFTER HIS MOTHER MORE. BOTH HE AND HIS SISTER INHERITED THEIR MOLES FROM THEIR FATHER.

CHAPTER 26

TAKE CARE NOW.

THANK YOU FOR THE RAIN-COAT..

AT HIKARU'S HOUSE...THERE'S A FAMILY WHO KNOWS NOTHIN' ABOUT ALL THIS. I'M SURE THEY'RE PREPARIN' SUPPER AN' WAITIN' FOR HIM TO GET HOME LIKE THEY ALWAYS HAVE.

I JUST CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO ALL THAT

WHEN I THINK ABOUT TSUJINAKA-KUN'S OR MIKARU-KUN'S FAMILIES

ONE-ONE

.....!!

...YER...

MAYBE MY DAUGHTER'S BACK?

COM-ING

GCHAK

BNNH
BNNH BNNH BNNH
BNNH BNNH BNNH
BNNH BNNH BNNH BNNH BNNH
BNNH
BNNH BNNH BNNH
BNNH BNNH BNNH BNNH BNNH

WELL, KAORU SAID IT WAS THE CUTEST ONE.

CREAK

CREAK

CREAK

HEY.

WAS THAT FLOATIE REALLY THE BEST CHOICE?

IT AIN'T EVEN A PROPER RING.

IT'S GREAT THAT KAORU'S BEEN GOIN' TO SCHOOL LATELY...

...AND MAKIN' FRIENDS TO GO TO THE POOL WITH.

BUT WHY'D I HAVE TO GO ALL THE WAY TO MION TO BUY A FLOATIE?

IT'S SUCH A HASSLE TO CARRY.

BECAUSE YA BOUGHT ONE THAT'S ALREADY INFLATED.

JUST LET THE AIR OUT AN' FOLD IT UP.

PFT!

GETTIN' ALL SENTI-MENTAL.

[illegible] GIANT SALAMAN-DER

THAT'D BE KINDA SAD, WOULDN'T ~?

...SO ANYWAY, I'VE LEARNED A [illegible]

BZZ

LIKE ABOUT THE "SIN" OF THE INDOLIS...

DON'T REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE NOUNUKI-SAMA, DO YA?

YOU

ESPECIALLY THAT STUFF 'BOUT "GRANTIN' WISHES"...

CREAK

...BUT FOR SOME REASON I'VE BEEN FORGETTIN' THINGS.

AND LATELY I'VE STARTED REMEMBERIN' BITS AN' PIECES.

I... SHOULD...

I FEEL LIKE... I CAN GRANT ANY WISH.

CREAK

I SORTA THINK THAT'S TRUE.

ANYTHIN'? FOR REAL?

...THAT'S SOME BIG TALK. HA-HA...

AND FOR YOU, I'D GRANT ANY W'SH Y'ASK FOR

GO FOR IT.

YEAH.

...SOMETHING DANGEROUS MIGHT HAPPEN.

IF MY WISH... REALLY CAME TRUE, THEN...

HAAH

...WE STILL DON'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH THE IMPURITIES, WHICH ARE A PRETTY IMPORTANT PART OF ALL THIS...

EVEN IF WE KNOW WHAT NOUNUKI-SAMA IS...

CRE AK

CRE AK

NAW. I'M GOOD.

IT'S JUST ONE CONFUSIN' THING AFTER ANOTHER POPPIN' UP.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT SKETCH WAS ABOUT EITHER...

HEEEY!

AH!

BZZH

CHECK IT OUT, YOSHIKI!

.....

MINCEY!!

NAW, HE STILL HATES YA.

HE'S GOTTEN PRETTY USED TO YOU.

HE'S DAN-CIN'.

HEY...

HA HA HA!

HE'S STRONGER THAN HE LOOKS.

HE WAS JUST FISHIN' FOR A SQUEEZE TREAT?

THAT PUNK.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

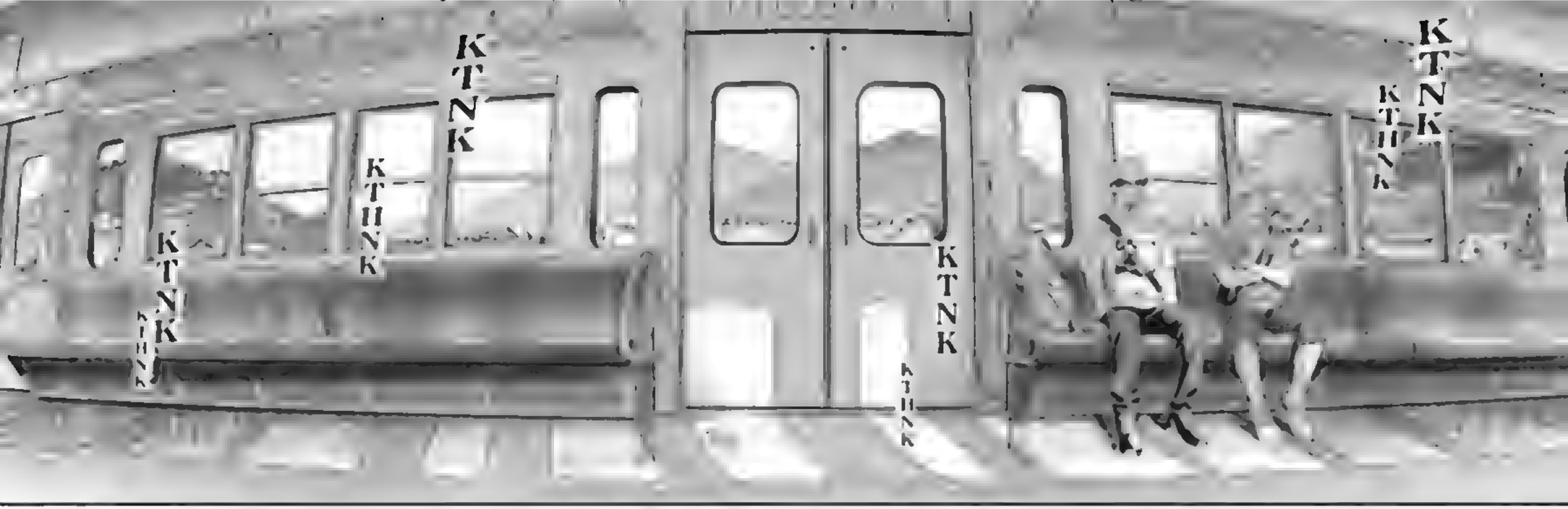
IT'S SUMMER BREAK, AIN'T IT?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

NO POINT IN JUST SITTIN' HERE AN' THINKIN' FOREVER.

I WANNA SEE IT AT LEAST ONCE.

HOW 'BOUT WE GO TO THE BEACH RIGHT NOW?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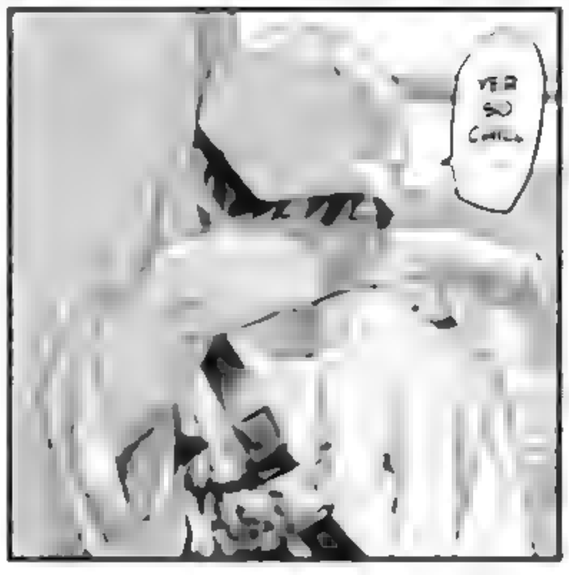
BY THE WAY THE OTHER DAY

I HAVEN'T BEEN TO THE BEACH SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
IT'S ABOUT TWO HOURS FROM ABIKAYAMA STATION ON THE TANSEN


YER SO CHILL

WHAT'S THAT BUTT-LOOKIN' BUILDIN' OVER THERE'?
WOO-WEEEE!! NOT DAMN, WOULDJA LOOKIT THAT!!

THEN, WHEN I GOT TO THE TORII GATE...

...SO I WENT TO THE SHRINE.

...I HAD TO VISIT THE MIKASAS FOR SOMETHIN'

BRING THIS OVER AS THANKS FOR KAORU'S K-KATA

BZZZT

DUNNO... WAS ABLE TO GO IN JUST FINE AFTER THAT, THOUGH.

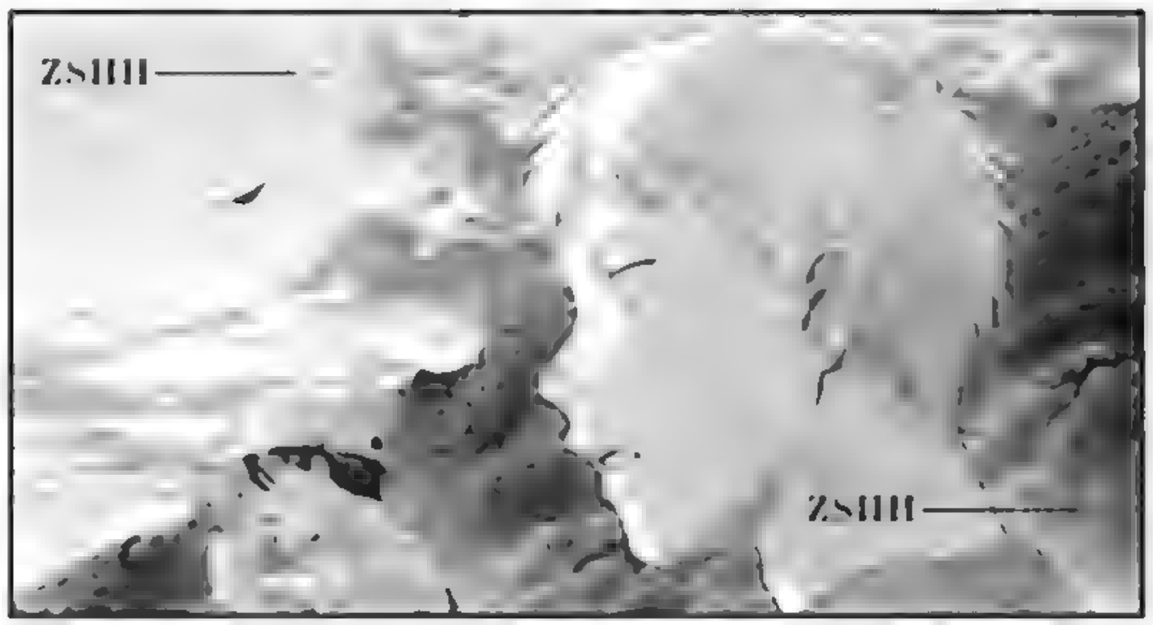
HUH? WHY?

"MAJIRIMONO"...

ONLY THING I CAN THINK OF IS WHEN I STOPPED BY BEFORE AN' YOUR ROOM WAS CHOCK-FULL OF OLD-MAN SPIRITS. I WAS SERIOUSLY CRACKIN' UP...

KTSHVK

KTSHVK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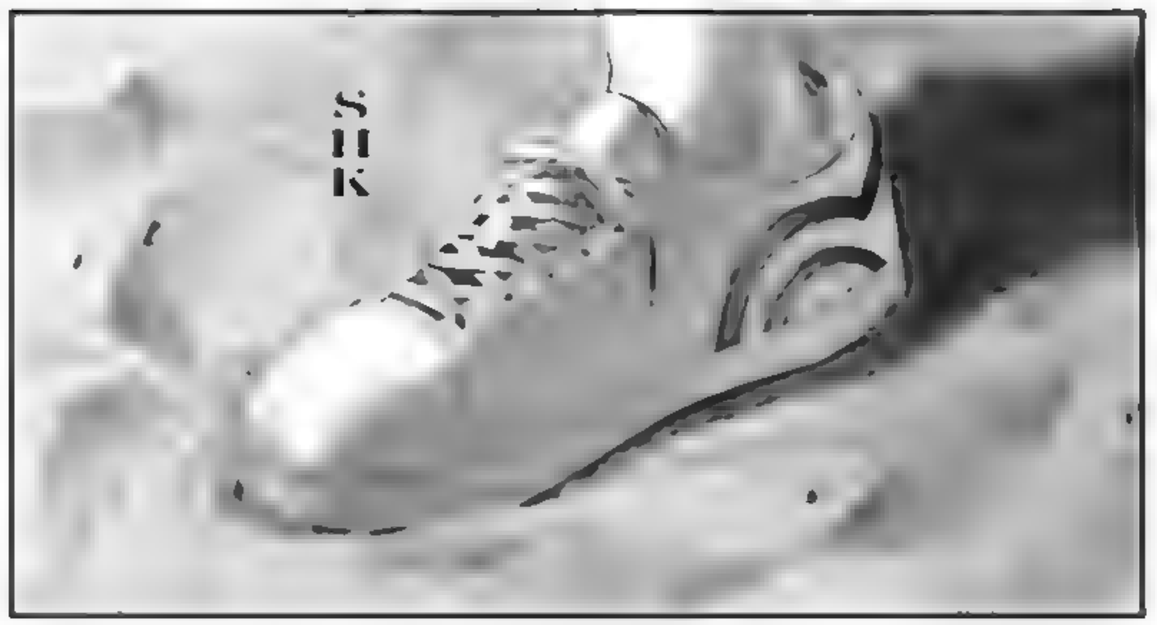

SHK

IT'S HUGE!

THE SEA IS WILD!

WOW

SO COOL!

I KNOW IT'S GETTIN' ON IN THE EVENING BUT THERE REALLY AIN'T NO ONE AROUND...

MAYBE EVERYONE'S OVER AT THE NEW BEACH

ZSHH

AAAAAAA!

ZSHH

OH NO

HHSZ

HHSZ

HHSZ

HHSZ

...I ALSO REMEMBERED THE MOMENT WHEN I ENTERED HIKARU'S BODY.

ZSHH

HMM-
H...S

AND GRANTIN' THAT WISH IS WHAT GOT ME HERE.

AS I HEARD WAS DON' I HEARD 'M SAY

..."IT'D BE GREAT IF NO ONE GOT SAD ABOUT THIS.

"I DON'T WANNA LEAVE YOSHIKI ALONE."

SO I...

...THINK I'M GONNA GO BACK TO THE MOUN-TAIN.

...BUT I'M SORRY.

I DON'T THINK I CAN FULFILL THAT WISH.

THE REASON I'VE BEEN ATTACKIN' YA RECENTLY...

...IS PROLLY 'COS MY TRUE NATURE'S COMIN' OUT.

...HUH?

DON'T MAKE MUCH SENSE TO HUMANS.

BUT I STARTED REALIZIN' THAT MYSELF LATELY.

I WANNA FILL THE EMPTINESS INSIDE ME...

.. AND I GET THIRSTY FOR SOULS.

H—

HO—

HOLD ON, NOW

HUH?

BUT I DON'T WANNA KILL YOU...

IT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN.

I'VE KILLED LOTSA PEOPLE, AND I MIGHT KILL AGAIN.

HUH? NO WAY.

RETURNIN' TO THE MOUNTAINS MIGHT NOT EVEN BE A SUREFIRE SOLUTION...

...BUT IT SHOULD MAKE THINGS PEACEFUL WHILE YER ALIVE.

WHAT... WAS ALL THAT RESEARCH FOR, THEN ?

YA CAN'T.

AND YOU MOVE FORWARD WITH YER LIFE AS A HUMAN BEING.

AND YOU ALL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

THAT'D BE THE BEST ENDIN'.

THE MONSTER GOES AWAY

YOU ACCEPT HIKARU'S DEATH

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO.... REALIZIN' ALL THAT STUFF!!

IT'S FINE.

SPLAS

SPLAS

YOU BEIN' DUMB OR SOMETHIN'

DON'T YA WANNA STAY HERE?

JUST KEEP BEIN' WHO YOU ARE, AN' WITHOUT BEIN' ASHAMED OF NOTHIN'.

NO SUCH THING AS A BORIN' MOVIE FOR ME.

[redacted]

...THE REAL HIKARU LIKED WATERMELON, BUT I LIKE ICE CREAM THE BEST.

AN' I LIKE PAPICCO MORE'N GACHIGACHI-KUN.

[redacted]

MAYBE I WAS JUST A [illegible] FOR THE REAL HIKARU TO YA

...BUT YA GAVE A LOT TO SOMEONE LIKE ME.

AND I [illegible] YA

:

WELL

...IT WAS REAL FUN BEIN' WITH YA, YOSHIKI...

NOT AS HIKARU BUT AS THE MASTER I AM

[illegible] NOW I [illegible]

THIS FEELIN' PROLLY AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE ROMANTIC LOVE OR FRIENDSHIP.

YO-
SHIKI.

NO.
THAT
AIN'T

THANKS
FOR
EVERYTHIN'.

NO!

IT'S JUST HOW IT GOES

AIN'T NO OTHER WAY

SPLASH!!

SPLASH!!

I DON'T THINK OF YOU AS HIKARU ANYMORE!

YER NOT A REPLACE-MENT FOR THE REAL HIKARU!!!

DON'T GIMME THAT CRAP ...!!!!

TO HELL WITH "HAPPILY EVER AFTER"...!!

IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT

DON'T PUSH THAT "MOVIN' FORWARD" BULLSHIT ON ME

YER JUST GIVIN' UP!

GOIN' BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN WON'T DO A DAMN THING.

BECAUSE Y'SEE, HIKARU-KUN...

...YOU'RE NOT NOUNUKI-SAMA.

THIS WHOLE "SACRIFICING ONE THING TO SAVE ANOTHER" IDEA...

...IS A TERRIBLE MISCON-CEPTION.

VOLUME 5 END

YA SAID YA WANTED SOMETHIN' CUTE, RIGHT?
IT'S A PLUSHIE OF A RHINOCEROS BEETLE LARVA.
CHECK IT OUT, KAORU. I GOTCHA A GIFT
THAT AIN'T CUTE
HUH?
KAORU
9 YRS OLD
YOSHIKI
13 YRS OLD

SLIGHTLY ANNOYING THINGS ABOUT YOSHIKI

HE WON'T TELL YA THE TRUTH EVEN WHEN IT'S ALL OVER HIS FACE.
I ALWAYS END UP FIGURING IT OUT ANYWAY.
T WAS CLEAR HE DIDN T LIKE IT, BUT HE WOULDN T SAY SO (HE WAS HAPPY WHEN I GAVE H.M NON-SWEET THINGS AFTER THAT)
MM TASTY!
THE FIRST TIME GAVE 'IM SOMETH.N' SWEET

HE WATCHES VIDEOS OF FOLKS BE N' PROVED WRONG.
AND HE SORTA LIKES TO QU BBLE.
HE'S HEAVY IN ALL SORTS OF WAYS.
HE'S A NAG AND GETS ALL UP IN YER BUSINESS.
HE GETS STUCK IN HIS OWN HEAD WORRYIN'.
AND HE SOMETIMES GROWS FACIAL HAIR.
HEY!! WASH YER HANDS!

BONUS

THE PRINCESS AND THE MONSTER

THE PRINCESS AND THE MONSTER

THE PRINCESS AND THE MONSTER

YOU'VE... BEEN INTO READING PICTURE BOOKS AND FAIRY TALES LATELY, HUH?

OH, THIS?

PICTURE BOOKS'RE THE EASIEST TO UNDER-STAND.

WELL, I DON'T REALLY GET HUMANS...

...SO I'M STUDYIN' THEM.

I HATE THAT FAIRY TALE.

LEARNIN' MORAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS, HUH?

WHY?

A MAN-EATING MONSTER FALLS IN LOVE WITH A PRINCESS, REPENTS FOR ALL SORTS OF THINGS HE DID, AND THEN MARRIES HER.

IT'S WAY TOO CONVENIENT.

POP

AND A MONSTER FALLING IN LOVE IS JUST...I MEAN, IF IT REPRODUCED ASEXUALLY, THEN THAT CONCEPT WOULDN'T REGISTER WITH HIM TO BEGIN WITH.

FROM THE MONSTER'S POINT OF VIEW, A TRUE HAPPY ENDING WOULD BE HAVING THE PRINCESS JOIN HIM IN EATING PEOPLE.

MUMBLE

MUMBLE

MUMBLE

LIKE, IT PUSHES THIS IDEA THAT GETTING DRESSED UP AND EATING CAKE IN A CASTLE IS BLISS.

I wuv my master♡

MUMBLE

I HATE IT JUST ABOUT AS MUCH AS THOSE ANIMAL SHOWS WHERE PEOPLE DUB OVER DOGS.

THE WHOLE THING'S JUST HUMAN-CENTRIC AND ARROGANT.

THE WAY YER GOIN' ON ABOUT IT IS KINDA CREEPY! HA-HA!

YOU MUST REALLY HATE IT!!

...

IT'S INTERESTIN' TO LEARN ABOUT THINGS THAT'RE DIFFERENT FROM YERSELF.

EVEN IF I DON'T GET IT, IT'S STILL INTERESTIN'.

...SHUT UP.

BUT YER RIGHT THAT IT'S TOLD FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE. THAT'S WHY IT'S GOOD FOR ME.

...THAT I COULD TEACH HIM.

BUT... I USED TO ALSO THINK...

I'LL HAVE TO TEACH HIM.

...AND TRIED APPLYIN' HUMAN VALUES TO HIM.

I ASSUMED HE WAS JUST IMMATURE...

I'M THE ARROGANT ONE HERE.

...THAT HIKARU WILL NEVER BE HUMAN...

THE SITUATION WITH ASAKO ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR...

THIS SCENE'S FUNNY!

HA HA HA HA!

I DON'T REALLY GET HIS HUMOR.

HA HA HA HA HA!

DEPENDS ON YER TASTE, RIGHT!?

Humans aren't tasty at all.

Chicken tastes much better!

DEEP DOWN, HE MAY WANT TO EAT HUMANS...

...BUT HE WON'T.

I THINK THAT'S KINDA NICE.

I THINK THIS SORT OF THING'S IMPORTANT.

BUT THIS MONSTER LEARNED HE COULD GET BY WITHOUT EATIN' PEOPLE.

YEAH, YEAH!

THAT'S WHY I WANNA LEARN ABOUT HUMANS.

THE PRINCESS AND THE MONSTER

BUT I THINK THE PRINCESS SHOULD GET TO KNOW THE MONSTER MORE.

INSTEAD OF TURNING THE MONSTER HUMAN...

...SHE REALLY HAS TO LEARN WHAT'S DIFFERENT...

...AND WHAT'S THE SAME BETWEEN THEM.

AND I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOU TOO...

click

YEAH.

BONUS END

Q&A

Q How has Yoshiki's father's behavior affected Yoshiki?

—Yoshiki's parents argue often, but although his father isn't the type to really talk back whenever they do fight, he expresses his feelings by slamming doors. He's also been more withdrawn ever since Hikaru's father died. Yoshiki grew up seeing his father struggle with communication, and that's led him to resent his father and feel disgusted as he sees himself becoming more and more like him over the years.

Q What types of music are Hikaru, "Hikaru," and Yoshiki into?

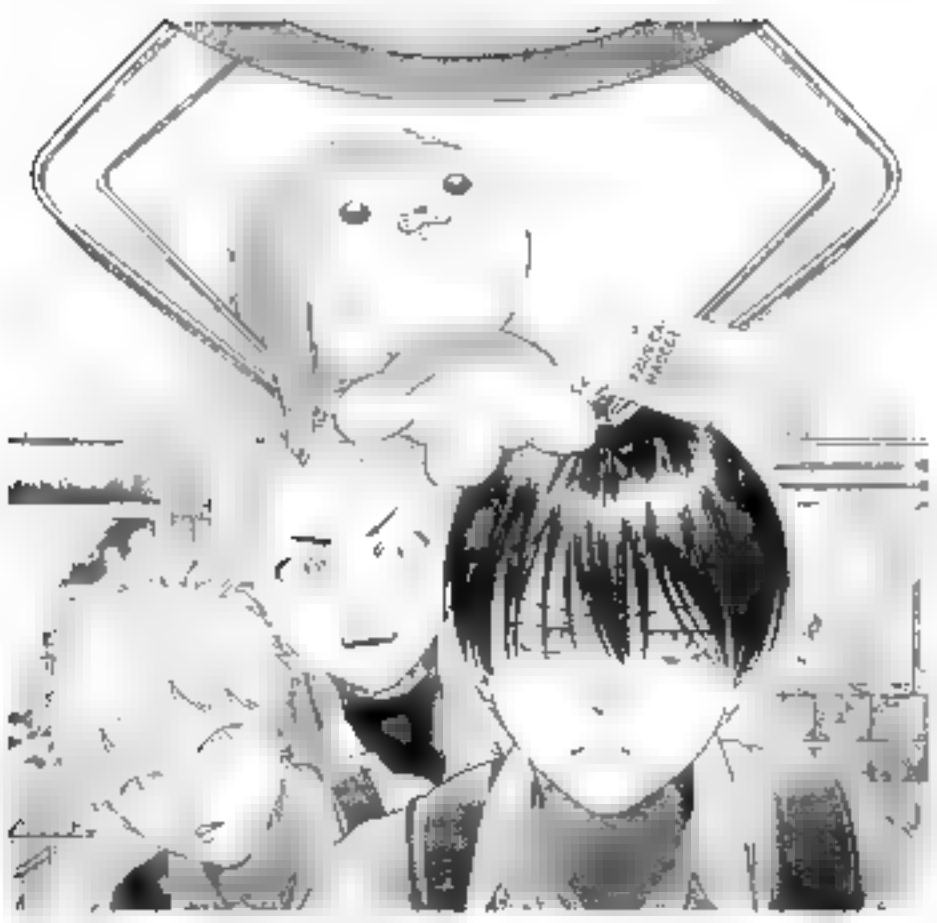
— Hikaru often listened to J-rock and anime theme songs. "Hikaru" listens to anything, but he's easily moved by lyrics. Yoshiki likes gloomy tracks without lyrics and often listens to them alone in his room.

Q I'm curious to know how "Hikaru" feels about Kaoru! At the summer festival in Volume 2, it was heartwarming to see Kaoru being led by "Hikaru's" hand and also holding hands with her older brother, Yoshiki.

——When Hikaru was alive, Kaoru was something like a real little sister to him, and he always looked out for her. He wasn't as attentive as Yoshiki, but Hikaru often acted subconsciously to help Kaoru. At the summer festival, those actions from the real Hikaru were also expressed through "Hikaru." Since becoming "Hikaru," he's been programmed to see her as a "sisterlike, precious entity," so he might seem somewhat cold from Kaoru's perspective.

Q Does "Hikaru" possess all of the real Hikaru's sensory memories from any given time? Is it like the smells, sounds, and all the emotions felt at a certain time are left over as "Hikaru's memories"?

——Yes. However, for "Hikaru," it's like having a thick dictionary of "Hikaru's memories" suddenly crammed into his head, so even when he experiences something the real Hikaru has already experienced, it feels new to "Hikaru."



Q Based on the illustrations and other things you've drawn so far, it almost seems like "Hikaru" might not feel cold. But when it comes to his perception of heat, what does "Hikaru" feel? In the story, he says things like "Hoo-ee! It's hot as hell!" and uses a fan, so it seems like he can feel heat more than cold...

—— He doesn't have an instinctual fear of death, so he feels hot and cold merely as enjoyable sensations. His pain tolerance is also high, so he doesn't mind when his limbs go numb from the cold, and if he gets severely sunburned, he recovers from it quickly.

Q How many other types of Labor Cat mascots are there besides the cat that grew its hair out? And which of those cats is the most popular?

——There are several, including Boycott Cat and Boss Cat. The main character, Labor Cat, is the most traditional and has been a huge hit with high school girls.

Q Could you rank Yoshiki, "Hikaru," Asako, Yuuki, and Maki in terms of intelligence!?

— From smartest to dumbest, it's Yoshiki → Asako → Yuuki, followed by Maki and "Hikaru," who are equally the dumbest. By the way, "Hikaru" gets the same grades that Hikaru did when he was alive, but while Hikaru hated studying, "Hikaru" enjoys it. However, he doesn't really understand what's going on in class.

Q Among Yoshiki and his friends, who's the best at art? And who's not so great at it?

— The best artist is Asako. Maki also likes to copy anime art, so he's surprisingly good at drawing. Yuuki makes art that's so bad it's good. Yoshiki is very attentive to detail in his art but often messes up the balance. Hikaru (and "Hikaru") was the worst at art.

Q When did Kurebayashi-san first discover she was able to return impurities to the other side?

—— She's been able to see impurities ever since she was a child but first sent an impurity back to the other side when she was in high school. It caused quite a stir at the time, so she has since lived her life hiding her ability. However, inadvertently helping some people with her ability has caused rumors of her to spread, which is a bit of a problem for her.

Q Mokumokuren-sensei, do you use analog art materials or digital tools?

—— I draw everything entirely digitally.

Afterword

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR READING VOLUME 5. I ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR *THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED* TO CONSIST OF THREE BASIC PARTS, WITH VOLUMES 1–3 BEING THE "DAILY LIFE ARC," VOLUMES 4–5 BEING THE "MYSTERY SOLVING ARC," AND VOLUME 6 BEING THE START OF A WHOLE NEW PART. THERE'S STILL MORE TO COME, SO I HOPE YOU'LL CONTINUE SUPPORTING THE SERIES!

ASSISTANT:
NOMU
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

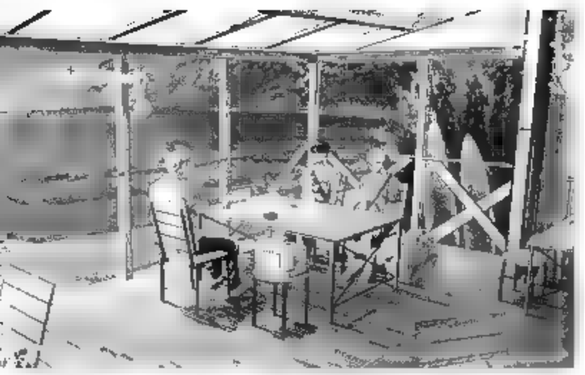
MOKUMOKUREN

THERE WAS A QUESTION ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I SWITCHED THEIR HAIRCUTS, SO I WENT AHEAD AND TRIED IT OUT.

Tanaka appears before the boys

with **a proposition,**

but **what could it be?**



THE SUMMER

HIKARU DIED

continues in Volume 6...

THE SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

TRANSLATION NOTES

COMMON HONORIFICS

-san: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
-sama: Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
-kun: Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
-chan: An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
-(o)nii/nee, nii-san/nee-san, aniki/aneki: Terms of endearment meaning "big brother" and "big sister" that may be more widely used to address any person who is like a sibling, regardless of whether they are related or not.

GENERAL

Hikaru: The Chinese character for Hikaru's name means "light."

PAGE 49

Nisayama: The Chinese characters used for this location name refer to cinnabar, the primary ore mineral of mercury, known for its bright-red hue.

PAGE 52

MINE: A reference to a popular Japanese social media app on which users can text, share images or videos, and make phone calls.

PAGE 83

Indou: The Indous' family name is composed of the Chinese character for "taboo" or "abhorrent," and the Chinese character for "shrine."

PAGE 156

Yukata: A lightweight Japanese kimono, typically worn in summer.

Torii: Found at the entrances of Shinto shrines, these traditional red gates mark the transition to a sacred space.

PAGE 168

Papicco: A reference to a frozen dessert packaged in tubes.

Gachigachi-kun: A reference to a brand of ice candy with a crunchy texture.

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

5

TRANSLATION: AJANI OLOYE

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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